



Air Pilot

FEB 2018 ISSUE 25





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 C J Spurrier

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,
Dowgate Hill House, 14-16 Dowgate Hill,
London EC4R 2SU.

EDITOR:
Paul Smiddy BA (Econ), FCA
EMAIL: editor@airpilots.org

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

PRINTED BY:
Printed Solutions 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.

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS:
The copy deadline for the April 2018 edition of
Air Pilot is 1 March 2018.

The address is:
14-16 Dowgate Hill House, London EC4R 2SU.
Our telephone number remains unchanged

TELEPHONE: 020 7404 4032
FAX NO: 020 7404 4035
EMAIL: office@airpilots.org
WEBSITE: www.airpilots.org

Diary

FEBRUARY 2018

7th	Pilot Aptitude Testing	RAF Cranwell
8th	General Purposes & Finance Committee	Dowgate Hill House
12th	Ladies visit	Goldsmiths' Hall
20th	Luncheon Club	RAF Club

MARCH 2018

1st	General Purposes & Finance Committee	Cutlers' Hall
1st	Court	Cutlers' Hall
12th	Company AGM	Merchant Taylors' Hall
16th	United Guilds Service	St Paul's Cathedral
22nd	Instructors' Working Group	Dowgate Hill House

APRIL 2018

1st	RAF Centenary Service	St Clement Danes
10th	Court Lunch with the Poulters	Cutlers' Hall
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
25th	Cobham Lecture	TBC

VISITS PROGRAMME

Please see the flyers accompanying this issue of Air Pilot or contact Liveryman David Curgenvin 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 new PC21 of the RAAF, courtesy of Wing Commander Roland Morscheck, OC CFS, RAAF

A message from your Editor..

All businesses, and indeed industries, find it easier to maximise returns for stakeholders if they operate in a known environment, where risks can be minimised. That is not to overlook the small number of companies that actively seek areas of rapid and disruptive change to exploit resulting profit opportunities.

Sadly we seem to be in an era where the UK Government much prefers to kick the can down the road when faced by a difficult decision. The choice of location of a new runway for the South East is a case in point.

Defence procurement is replete with examples. In this issue Andrew Roberts outlines the issues created by the Nimrod MRA4 cancellation and the procurement of its later partial substitute, the Poseidon. The latest Strategic Defence and Security Review was announced in July 2017 (packaged as a review of the 2015 Review!), with the intention to publish findings before the end of 2017. Various very serious cuts to the country's military capability were floated in the Autumn, no doubt to test the national mood. There was a high degree of push-back on these both from MPs, including those with military experience, and retired senior officers. Yet at the time of writing the indication is that the review has been split; whilst we may expect the Security element soon, the Defence half has been deferred sine die.

The Government published "*Beyond the Horizon - the future of UK aviation*", coincidentally also in July 2017. This was a "call for evidence" document, and an attempt to create (or at least start the creation of) an intellectual framework for decisions affecting the industry. Or, in its own words, to "*set out the aviation policy-making for 2050 and beyond*". The intention of its timetable is that "*A final Aviation Strategy will then be published by the end of 2018.*" Clearly the over-riding issue in the back of politicians' minds is the long overdue decision on London's Third Runway. No doubt it is exercising the minds of many mandarins too. The document is pleasingly passenger-centric; it is also voter-centric in that the environmental impact of the industry's recent and future growth is very front of mind. It is a sadness to this writer that General Aviation was deemed worthy of only one paragraph in an 86 page document! AOPA, in tempered tones, has made its views known about this disparity.

Perhaps my eyesight is not what it was, but I have never noticed any long grass in Whitehall. Nonetheless there seems to be plenty around when our Government seeks to defer a tricky decision. The postponement of difficult decisions by the Government is harmful for the health of our defence and aviation industries; it severely hampers decision-making in the senior echelons of the Armed Forces, and reduces their effectiveness. Ultimately it is bad value for the taxpayer.

Paul Smiddy - Editor



Contents

News Round Up	4
The Master's Message	6
Gazette	7
The Master's Tour Part 2	8
A Message from the Support Unit	12
From the Desk of the DAA	13
Scholarships and Bursaries 2017	14
Duncan Simpson	24
Air Pilots Benevolent Fund	27
Maritime Patrol	28
Company Visit to RAF Benson	31



News Round Up

CAA HEAD

The UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has announced the appointment of Richard Moriarty as its new Chief Executive. He will succeed Andrew Haines, whose term of office will expire in the Summer.

Richard re-joined the CAA in 2016 as Group Director of Consumers and Markets and Deputy Chief Executive. Prior to joining he was the Chief Executive at the Legal Services Board, which oversees the legal profession in England and Wales.

We look forward to working with Mr. Moriarty.

ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON AVIATION - UPDATE

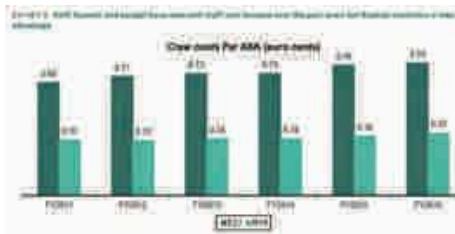
There are now 83 parliamentary members – including 7 former Cabinet Ministers, 12 Privy Councillors and one current party leader in this group – one of the largest in the current Parliament. The list of members can be found at www.generalaviationappg.uk/parliamentary-members.

The group recently met with the Secretary of State for Transport, Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP, and set out its priorities. The urgent need to maintain a strategic network of General Aviation airfields was top of the agenda. The Chairman, the Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP, sent a follow-up letter to the Secretary of State, which can be viewed at <http://www.generalaviationappg.uk/parliamentary-group-on-general-aviation-reiterates-calls-for-action-from-transport-secretary/>

The group gave the Secretary of State a deadline of 14th February 2018 for his responses, and was reassured by him that he recognises the problems General Aviation faces.

RYANAIR

Since the last edition of this magazine, the low-cost airline (under duress) has reversed its previous policy on non-recognition of aircrew trade unions.



Source: Bernstein

OFFICE MOVE

As mentioned in the Clerk's December e-newsletter and the December Air Pilot, the Company's main headquarters has moved. The move from the old offices has gone very smoothly and the Company is now based at Dowgate Hill House in the City of London. The office email and telephone numbers remain the same, although, at the time of writing there have been some problems with the telecoms supplier; the postal address is Dowgate Hill House, 14-16 Dowgate Hill, London EC4R 2SU.

PROJECT PEGASUS

This is a Home Office campaign coordinating Border Force, National Crime Agency and Police initiatives to increase vigilance in and around the UK's GA airfields. Members of the GA community are encouraged to be alert to unusual or suspicious activity on and around airfields and report it using the confidential Crimestoppers free phone line 0800 555 111. Flying club officials and aerodrome operators may wish to download all the campaign materials including posters, leaflets and social media graphics.

OP RUMAN

Our visit to RAF Benson (see page 31) highlighted the work of the UK's armed forces in relief work after the Autumn's hurricanes in the Caribbean. Another of our affiliated units, HMS Ocean, was also heavily involved in this operation. The Master received a comprehensive summary from the ship's commander, Captain Robert Pedre.

Having been deployed from its UK base as flagship for the Commander, Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 in the Mediterranean, Ocean was diverted at short notice to make good speed to the Caribbean following Hurricane Irma. She stopped at Gibraltar for a hurried replenishment of disaster relief goods – during a 38 hour stay at Gib, more than 270 tonnes were loaded in 24 hours. She arrived off Tortola at dawn on 22 September, with the region having just suffered another hurricane – Maria. The crew of Ocean conducted 12 days of Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Operations in the BVI, Anguilla, Dominica and Turks & Caicos. In some 253 flying hours, 1081 people were moved as well as the freight. The embarked squadron of Royal Marines conducted almost 200 landing craft launches and recoveries. The ship also evacuated 39 vulnerable British nationals, giving life-saving treatment to one.

It is particularly poignant that this sterling effort was followed by news in January that the British Government is in negotiations to sell HMS Ocean to the Brazilian Government for a reported £84m. The vessel was commissioned in 1998, and received a comprehensive refit as recently as 2014 for a reported cost of £65m. HMS Ocean, an impressive amphibious platform, will not be directly replaced. This will all leave the UK military with no significant seaborne air power until the QE class carriers are commissioned (and receive their aircraft).

HMS Ocean (in the Gulf)



Loading disaster relief supplies at Gibraltar



Post-disaster reconstruction by the Ship's Company – with nary a B&Q in sight



Wildcat & Chinook in operation



Wildcat Flight 216 is welcomed back to RNAS Yeovilton



The human side of military operations



Chinook disembarks civilians

LAST FLIGHTS

Capt Phil Brentnall died since our last issue. There was a comprehensive obituary in the Telegraph. Phil, as a flight commander on 218 squadron, was in charge of the Sterling force's "window" dropping operations on D Day. He then progressed to Ruhr bombing in Lancasters, and graduated to BOAC after the war. Heavily involved in flight safety at BOAC/BA, he was awarded the Company's Cumberbatch Trophy in 1979.

A tribute to Past Master Duncan Simpson can be found on page 24.

The Master's Message

Captain Chris Spurrier

Welcome to my last message to you as Master. I write this in early January. Christmas has gone, turkey and the last mince pies eaten, New Year's resolutions made and forgotten, and the post-Christmas diet just beginning. This year the diet is to be more strictly observed than usual since our tour of the regions has resulted in a wardrobe shrinkage crisis. And she who controls the food supply has some rather strong ideas about wardrobe shrinkage. Ah well, salad for supper again.

We returned from our tour of New Zealand, Australia and Hong Kong just in time for the annual Carol Service and informal supper. That is always a joy and, to me, signals the beginning of Christmas. Most of the other things we have done since my last message are covered in the account of the Master's tour. There remains, though, one of the most important events in the Honourable Company's history for the last eighteen or so years. We have moved house. Some time ago I wrote to you all, explaining the reasons behind the move. The Air Safety Trust – through which we held shares in the company 9 Warwick Court Limited – requested that the building be offered for sale. Shortly before Christmas the period for offers closed and we were pleased to learn that a very satisfactory offer had been made and accepted. In the meantime our Learned Clerk, Paul Tacon, had arranged for our belongings to be removed from Cobham House. Some were put into storage, some high-value items, such as our silverware, were taken to Cutler's Hall and the bits we need to continue in business were moved to new temporary premises on Dowgate Hill, near Mansion House. This is a suite of serviced offices, not large but sufficient for our needs until we can find a property to purchase. The move was completed just before the Christmas break. Once the sale of Cobham House is complete and the money received we shall commence the search for a new building. That will be

overseen by a small group tasked to ensure that the premises are suitable, affordable, and will last us into the future. When I began my the Mastership last March my prime objective was to resolve the premises question. My preferred option proved unobtainable. I am, though, very pleased that we are in a position where we finally have control of our own home. I had hoped to complete the process during my year but that has not proved possible. That, of course, will now be under the stewardship of the next Master.

There are some events between now and the AGM to which I am very much looking forward. Paula and I have been invited to present awards at the dinner for the Dawn to Dusk Competition. Many of you will be aware of this but for those who haven't come across it, the Dawn to Dusk Competition requires competitors to fly a self-set challenge in an aircraft of their own choice. They may choose their own date to complete the flight between, obviously, dawn and dusk on the same day. The objective is to encourage the most interesting employment of a flying machine within the limits of competent airmanship, and to demonstrate the capabilities of pilot and machine in a day's flying, in terms of furthering some original and praiseworthy objective. Our Patron, HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was instrumental in setting up the competition and was involved in the judging until very recently.

Secondly, I look forward to the election of a new Warden at the January Court meeting. This is always an exciting time, not least for the successful candidate, since he or she is expected to progress to the Mastership. We have four Assistants standing and, when you read this, you will know the result. Whatever the outcome, I wish the new Warden a happy and successful period in office. There will, too, be new Assistants joining the Court. I well remember my first year as



The Master and Paula celebrate Christmas in style

an Assistant. It was fascinating to learn how the Honourable Company – GAPAN as it then was – is governed, and I felt it was a great privilege to be a small part in that process. For any Liveryman who has an interest and the time, I cannot recommend too strongly that you consider standing for election next year.

Which really brings me to the point where I must look back at the events of this extraordinary year. In my first Master's Message I wrote of my ambitions for my term of office. There has been progress in most, but not all. As stated, we have moved the premises problem forward but not completed the transition, and that is a disappointment. We have started initiatives to promote STEM subjects among young people, with both the Science Museum and through a schools initiative advocated by Assistant Marion Wooldridge. Under the guidance of Warden Malcolm White the Strategic Working Group has produced the new Strategic Plan. With the help of Upper Freeman Dai Whittingham legislation to outlaw laser strikes against aircraft, and in fact all transport, was

introduced; this was lost with the prorogation of Parliament, but has now been re-introduced. Our DAA, John Turner, has been busy on many fronts, including the dangers of drones, although the problem is yet to be properly resolved. That particular horse is well and truly out of the stable.

On the broader front our charities have continued their work, assisting those in need and funding scholarships, gliding courses and academic bursaries. Past Master Roger Gault has worked hard to promote aviation apprenticeships and, in October, I was very pleased to present a certificate to one of our apprentices. The Livery Schools Link has flourished, with Assistant Rick Thomas, Warden John Towell and Upper Freeman Zoe Gell playing a huge part, aided by Assistant Dacre Watson, who is gently easing away from his previous, leading role there. Liveryman David Curgenvin and his team produced another round of fascinating visits, and gave me immense help in organising the Master's Garden Party at Charlton Park. And of course, overseeing all, we have our Learned Clerk, whose expertise and attention to

detail is essential in keeping me – and the whole Honourable ship – on a steady course. In this he has been ably assisted by Ruth, Angie, James and Anna. I cannot thank them enough for their help and forbearance when I've asked yet another silly question. If you doubt their expertise and their value, just look at the way in which they manage our two showcase events, the Livery Dinner and the T&A. I have frequently been told that our events are among the best organised in the City. And the T&A, of course, depends on Past Master Rick Peacock-Edwards and his committee to assess the award recipients.

I hope you have noticed in that paragraph the sheer number of those who have helped during the year. There are many more: the members in the Regions; the unsung volunteers; the committees of our societies; and all those who attend our visits, dinners and other events. Being your Master has been rather like an orchestral conductor. I said what I would like to happen, persuaded, cajoled, occasionally stamped my feet and waved my arms about a lot. And at the end I get all the applause whilst everyone

else has done the work. It's a very good system if you happen to be the Master.

Before I finish I must also publicly thank my wife, Paula. She has offered unstinting support, even during the times when I've stamped my feet. Paula has smiled through far too many visits to aviation museums – and (usually) collected me from the station from yet another late train. She has organised visits for the wives and partners of members, and has been an inspiration at times when inspiration was sadly lacking – even if it just meant pouring me another gin and tonic. (With luck, that paragraph was sufficiently generous to qualify me for some salad dressing on the lettuce leaf mentioned in paragraph one).

Being your Master has been a privilege I shall not forget and a pleasure that could not possibly be bettered. In my first Master's Message I said that one of my ambitions was for you, the members, to enjoy the year. That was and remains my most important ambition. I hope that in some small way I achieved it. My thanks for allowing me to serve you.

GAZETTE

APPROVED BY THE COURT 18 JANUARY 2018

ADMISSIONS

As Upper Freeman

Stephen George COLLYER

Alan Robert EVANS

William Paul HARWOOD (AUS)

David Anthony HUGHES (HK)

Paul Edward Mervyn JONES (HK)

Steven MONK

Alan WRIGLEY

As Freeman

David MOORMAN

Mark PERRY

As Associate

Udhana Tesala ABEYSEKERA (AUS)

Noah BECKMANN (AUS)

Hanif GREENWOOD

Maika LY (AUS)

Simon Peter WILLIAMS

ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE COURT

18 JANUARY 2018

REGRADE

To Livery

Robert Martin LIMB

To Upper Freeman

Stephen SMARTT

DECEASED

Peter BARKER

Harvey CRUSH

John D'ARCY

David MARTIN

Duncan SIMPSON

RESIGNATIONS

Jonathan BREEZE

Sean COYNE

Richard GALBRAITH

Adam JANICKI

Martin JEZARD

William PERRINS

Ian ROBINSON

Ian SHEPPARD

Clare WALKER

FORFEIT ALL BENEFITS

Patrick McHAFFEY

The Master's Tour - Part 2

Captain Chris Spurrier

Having completed the first part of the tour in August, as described in the October edition, we now moved on to New Zealand, Australia and Hong Kong. Paula and I left on the Saturday evening following the Trophies and Awards Banquet. With memories of the post horn gallop still ringing in our ears, we were scheduled to fly to Wellington, via Hong Kong and Auckland. It was a delight to find that the Captain on our Cathay flight to Hong Kong was Assistant Jonathan Legat - aviation can be a very small world. In Hong Kong we transferred to Air New Zealand for the second and third sectors, arriving in Wellington in surprisingly good condition. A taxi took us to the Wellington Club (highly recommended as a place to stay), where we were met by Liveryman Leslie Brown and left to recover.

The following day we had free time to visit the magnificent Te Papa museum, with its excellent Gallipoli exhibition and the world's largest giant squid (honest), followed by lunch on the harbour front, and a trip on the funicular to the heights above the City. That evening we met Bill Bennett, Chairman of the New Zealand Region, who was also staying in the Club and who, with Leslie, was to accompany me to our business meetings.

That was the calm before a busy day with first, the New Zealand CAA, with Graeme Harris, the Director and his

deputy. Throughout the tour, the same topics were discussed everywhere. UAVs, laser pointers, and loss of control, plus my current subject to push, replacement of Magnetic North by True North. Hereinafter these will be called "the usual topics". Other subjects discussed included air display regulation after the Shoreham accident, the review by the Ministry of Transport of the Civil Aviation Act 1990, fatigue management, progress with and resourcing of rule-making, and their about-to-be-released Sector Risk Profile for Part 135 Operations. Graeme also spoke of the new funding model, where the CAA is 88% funded by the users. This has reduced their income, and has affected resourcing, especially in the context of rule-making. Moving on to the Transport Accident Investigation Commission, we met Tim Burfoot, Chief Investigator and General Manager of Investigation Services, and some of his colleagues. In New Zealand this Commission covers all forms of transport accident, and it was interesting to hear their views on how trained investigators could cover air accidents as well as those, say, on the railway. Clearly specialist knowledge is required for the technical parts of each investigation but the investigative procedure is the same. Topics discussed were recreational drug



Chris near Auckland



Mike Cleaver with a wooden wombat

Aldinga



Paula wanted to bring him home



The tram



taking, and accidents, helicopter safety, current investigations, the Commission's "Watch List", and the level of resourcing and staffing.

A brief pause allowed the three of us to regain breath before meeting Pauline Lamb, Chief Operating Officer and acting CEO of Airways, the local equivalent of NATS. Pauline explained the new Southern Sky control concept for division of airspace control. New Zealand is responsible for a vast area of ocean and of the Antarctic. Pauline also explained her concerns over control of the increasing number of tourist helicopter flights to the New Zealand glaciers, particularly with regard to the commercial pressure on pilots to fly in marginal weather. This needs cross-department negotiation with the Ministry of Tourism. We discussed the possible replacement of Magnetic North with True as a heading reference, the impact of Brexit and, perhaps unique to New Zealand, the resilience of the ATC structure to disruption following an earthquake.

That evening a reception at the Wellington Club, hosted by Leslie Brown and Bill Bennett, gave us a further opportunity to meet many of these people again, together with Air Vice Marshal Tony Davies, Chief of the RNZAF, and Air Cdr Darryn Webb (his Air Component Commander). There were also many local members present. I hope they will forgive me for not listing them all but it was an absolute pleasure for Paula and for me to meet everyone.

At this stage there is a break in the formal proceedings. We had built into our schedule a few days for sightseeing as we had not been to New Zealand before. We hired a car and drove north, initially with Bill as our guide, who showed us points of interest on our way to Auckland. Here he and his wife Marlene gave us tea before launching us solo up clockwise around the island to Keri Keri, near the Bay of Islands, then back down the east coast, eventually meeting Bill again at RNZAF Whenuapai. Here we met AVM Tony Davies again and also Wg Cdr Andy Scott, the CO of 40Sqn. I had

presented Andy with the Brackley Memorial Trophy at the T & A and this was an opportunity to present it again, on their own territory. We were given an excellent lunch, followed by a tour of the Squadron and a briefing on their role, a visit to one of their C-130s (much nostalgia, moist eyes etc), and another visit, this time to a 757 modified for Antarctic operations. There was also an opportunity for me to demonstrate lack of recency (44 years) in a C-130 simulator - or perhaps it was just my natural incompetence... All too soon it was time to leave and drive to an hotel at Auckland airport (once more via Bill's home for another of Marlene's excellent teas). We were to depart very early next morning.

A very comfortable flight on an Air New Zealand Dreamliner took us to Adelaide, where we were met by Rob Moore, who heads the South Australia (SA) working group of the Australian Region, and Roger Lang and Jan Hoopman, with whom we were to stay. A brief pause to view the Vickers Vimy, which made the first official flight from the UK to Australia in 1919, and then on to Roger and Jan's house on the beachfront. Roger and Jan's hospitality was outstanding. The following day Rob, Roger and I visited Cobham Aviation at Adelaide airport. That is now an immense organisation, running many aspects of aviation world-wide. Search and Rescue, maritime surveillance, defence training, civil transport, helicopter operations, and aircraft servicing and modification, are just some of those I can remember. We were mightily impressed their repair and servicing hangar. After lunch we progressed to the Aviation Museum, where we were joined by Upper Freeman Captain Steve Nelson, whose impressive knowledge of the exhibits was a joy. I sat in a DHC-4 Caribou, a type Steve used to fly, and also an F-111. From one extreme.... The museum itself is just superb. There were even bits to interest Paula.

On the following day we visited Flight Training Adelaide, a first-class flying

training facility which reminded me very much of the old College of Air Training at Hamble. It has a very impressive success rate, trains pilots for many Far East and Australian airlines, and is an Australian government approved facility. I was surprised to learn, though, that licences obtained in Australia cannot easily be imported into EASA. That evening we attended the South Australia formal dinner, where I was pleased to represent the Australian Bi-Centennial Award to Bas Sheffers on behalf of his Oz Runways electronic flight bag. And then, the following day, to Aldinga for their air day. I had known there was to be a spot landing competition - but not having landed a light aeroplane for many years I had expected to be excused. Well, I didn't bend the aeroplane.... A very convivial day, with an excellent barbecue. Steve Nelson took me for a ride in his RV7 (a lovely aeroplane to fly), and Mike Hanell flew both me and Paula in his beautiful Chipmunk. I have a photograph of Paula with one of the biggest smiles I can remember. Then it was time to bid farewell to Rob, Roger and Jan, as our friends from Port Elliott nearby had invited us to stay, so we were taken for two days croquet and sightseeing before they delivered us to the airport for our flight to Canberra.

Canberra - the Australian Capital Territory - was where we were met by Mike Cleaver and Pete Norford. After a meal together in our hotel we were left to unpack before business started the following day with visits to the head of the RAAF, Air Marshal Leo Davies (not related to AVM Tony Davies of the RNZAF, but an interesting coincidence), and Shane Carmody, CEO of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority. A wide-ranging discussion with AM Davies included the usual topics plus recruitment, outsourcing of services, and the RAAF's current and planned fleet. Their F35 order list is impressive. With CASA, as ever, we covered the usual topics. The following day Mike took us sightseeing to the National Arboretum, the Tidinbilla wildlife reserve, and the NASA Deep Space Communications



Royal Flying Doctor Service

facility. This was followed by a superb barbecue kindly provided by Pete and Janie Norford, where we met many members from the Canberra area.

On Thursday we managed a visit to Mark Hughes, Deputy Director of Air Services, Jim Wolfe, General Manager of Air Traffic Policy at the Department of Infrastructure and Nat Nagy, Executive Director of the Air Transport Safety Board. Discussions were, as ever, wide ranging, and included the proposal for a new airport at Sydney and airspace changes around the NASA facility near Canberra. That afternoon we were privileged to tour the Australian War Memorial with Mike and Pete, and to stay for the very moving Last Post ceremony, which is performed there daily.

Friday, and time to move on. Mike drove us to the Historic Aircraft Restoration Society Museum near Wollongong. Here we met Liveryman and former Chairman of the Australian Region, Sandy Howard. Sandy gave us a first-class tour of the museum before we waved goodbye to Mike. Sandy drove us on to Sydney, where we were to stay two nights with old RAF friends before an excellent lunch with our members in Sydney.

After lunch it was a rapid drive to the airport to catch a flight to Melbourne, where we were once more met by Mike Cleaver. A drive to our accommodation, thoughtfully arranged for us at the Sanctuary Lakes Golf Resort, gave us just

time to unpack before finding a meal. Then a night's sleep before a 9 am visit to the RAAF Museum at Point Cook - a fascinating, first-class museum. Point Cook itself was the first RAAF Central Flying School, and is now a designated heritage site. It was amusing to find the old married quarters, built along Harmony Avenue. No further comment. The museum trip was necessarily short. The RAAF had sent a King Air to take us across to the current CFS base and it would have been most impolite to keep our private aeroplane waiting! Some forty minutes later we were met by Wg Cdr Arnie Morscheck, CO of CFS, on the tarmac at East Sale. The main reason for the visit was to present the Grand Master's Australian Medal to the Roulettes, the RAAF aerobatic team. A very well-deserved award, presented after a buffet lunch. This was followed by a tour of the base, including briefings on the new RAAF academy now under construction, the RAAF pilot recruitment scheme and the introduction of their new trainer, the Pilatus P21. Having successfully crashed the P21 simulator, we made good our escape and were flown back to Point Cook. The following day Mike drove us to a member's lunch at the Royal Victoria Aero Club at Moorabbin. Over 100 years old, this is one of Australia's oldest flying schools. Returning to Sanctuary Lakes, we managed nine holes of golf before a final dinner with Mike. The following morning we departed for

Brisbane.

Brisbane was hosting an unfortunate cricket match, which will receive no further comment. The Chairman and Secretary of the Queensland working group, Tony Alder with his wife Meg and John Howie with Gael, met us at the airport and delivered us to the United Services Club. On the following day we visited the flight training facility of Boeing Australia, where Ed Field, its manager, together with Leighton Carr, showed us their virtual reality development facility. The demonstration of docking a spacecraft with the Spacelab was simply awesome. And then on to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, where we met their Chief Pilot, Shane Lawrey. This is a unique and very necessary service with absolutely dedicated people. We were shown their latest aircraft and the modifications which enable casualties to be loaded quickly and efficiently. The day finished with a formal dinner at the Queensland Club, where I presented the Master's Australian Regional Award to George Lloyd, always known as Peter. Now 97 years old, Peter is a role model for many. There were also awards of a scholarship certificate to Ben Nelson and an Aviation Studies Award to Anthony Hill. The formal parts of the visit over, on Sunday Tony and John took us to lunch at a rather splendid winery, followed by a tour of John's spectacular model railway. The next day it was on to Hong Kong.

Hong Kong was much changed since Paula and I were last there, but still a vibrant, exciting and colourful city. Local Chairman Tin Yun Lam with Locky Lawford and their wives, Veronica and Debbie, were to be our hosts for the visit, although Locky unfortunately was required to work on some days. Tin took me to the Cathay City facility, where I demonstrated my very rusty skills in a B747-400 series 8 simulator. Paula joined us for lunch before a short trip across to the Government Flying Services, where the Controller, Michael Chan, briefed us on their work. Their fixed-wing fleet is tasked with long range patrol and SAR work, whilst their

helicopters are employed in SAR, casualty evacuation, and in deploying police and special forces teams in anti-terrorist operations. At the conclusion of our visit a sundown sightseeing tour in one of their EC 551 helicopters returned us to Wan Chai. That produced another ear-to-ear grin from Paula. On the following day we visited the Hong Kong Observatory, where the Director, Shun Chi-ming, known as C-M, explained their work in met forecasting, with especial emphasis on typhoons, and also the aviation weather at Hong Kong Airport, where their work on forecasting turbulence, both terrain- and wake-induced, was fascinating. Sharon, the Assistant Director, gave us a tour of their museum and then of the public weather forecast broadcasting room, where, with coaching from presenter Sandy Man-kuen, Paula and I were able to demonstrate our aptitude – or, in my case, lack of it – as an on-screen forecaster. C-M then hosted us to a magnificent and very memorable lunch. A brief rest in the afternoon preceded a visit to the Happy Valley Races. I read with some excitement that, in the second race, a horse called London Master was running and persuaded everyone to

invest in what I saw as an omen. Everyone, that is, except Paula who backed another horse. Which won. Sometimes my wife worries me.

The following morning Tin and I were taken to meet Raymond Ng, the Assistant Director-General of the Civil Aviation Department and Michael Lau, Chief of Flight Standards. An interesting discussion, which again was far-ranging and included their search for a new head of their Accident Investigation Branch following, I understand, a re-organisation. We then moved on to their Air Traffic Control centre. Very similar to our Swanwick, it covers a large area of ocean and can face challenging conditions, especially during the typhoon season. I was intrigued to learn that each of the light fittings in the control room has one white and one yellow lamp. Their relative intensity is controlled through the day to mimic a circadian rhythm. This, we were told, reduces controller fatigue. Back to the hotel for another brief rest, before an evening tram ride through the City. With, of course, the occasional glass of wine. Then a free day before our final event of the tour, the formal dinner at the Aviation Club. This was a special evening, not least because of

the great friendship which our hosts, Tin and Veronica, Locky and Debbie, and Ian Fogarty had extended to us. Toasts over, Loving Cup passed, and speeches made, we returned to the hotel and prepared for our flight home. In good time for the Carol Service and Christmas.

It was good to see the ways in which the various groups are moving. Whilst one or two are experiencing what we hope are temporary recruitment problems, others are flourishing. In particular Rob Moore has been performing wonders in recruiting new, younger members in South Australia. Mike Cleaver has worked tirelessly to promote the Honourable Company and hopes to initiate a group in Western Australia. Mike drove many hundreds of kilometres in shepherding us around. Bill Bennett is trying very hard to reinvigorate the New Zealand Region, whilst the Hong Kong Region is flourishing, with a very active social side. There is no way in which we can thank everyone we met for their hospitality, their generosity and their friendship. It really was quite outstanding. Paula and I were, and remain, very, very grateful.



Paula forecasts a strong tailwind for the flight home

Admiring a croc



Government Flying Service Hong Kong



And Finally, a Message from the Support Unit...

By the Master's Consort, Paula Spurrier

What a fantastic year this has been, and if I were to list all the wonderful places visited, and the people along the way, then I shall end up with something the length of War and Peace.

The dinner at the Mansion House in March was a spectacular affair, with all the pomp and ceremony one would expect, but some of the special days have been quite simple. I loved the Service at St. Bartholomew the Great when the incense burning reduced the visibility to around ten yards, the guided walk of City Churches organized by the Plumbers and Constructors, and the Pewterers' Annual Exhibition turned out to be the ideal venue to purchase some gifts ready for our overseas tours. The Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, the Annual Service at St. Paul's, the 101 Sqn Centenary Parade at RAF Brize Norton. Small world that it is, the OC's wife and our son Ed were in the Southampton University Air Squadron together.

Then, the overseas tours. What a treat. In August we visited Washington DC, Montreal and Vancouver, none of which I had visited before. The Smithsonian Museums in Washington cover a vast area but there was only time to visit one which, surprise, surprise, was the Aviation Museum but all the more interesting when we had one guide dedicated for we three visitors. Our visit to Montreal coincided with the Rogers Cup Tennis Tournament and the hotel was full of tennis players and their entourage but, despite hanging around in the lobby, I failed to see anyone I recognised. Vancouver is a beautiful city and our hotel overlooked the float plane terminal. It was easy to spend lots of time on the balcony watching them take off and land. Even better when we flew in one on a day trip to Vancouver Island!

Two days after the Trophies and Awards which, as always, was one of the highlights of the year, we set off on the second leg of the tour. New Zealand, Australia and Hong Kong. This was my first visit to New Zealand and what a beautiful island it is. We started in Wellington at The Wellington Club and



First Chipmunk ride

visited the Te Papa Museum with its fascinating exhibition on the Gallipoli Campaign. The following day whilst Chris was at a meeting I spent the morning at Zealandia, a predator-proof ecosanctuary, which (according to their brochure) is home to some of the world's most extraordinary animals. Part of the plan was to have a bit of a holiday in NZ so over the course of the next few days, we covered 1600 kilometres from Wellington up to the Bay of Islands and back to Auckland for lunch with 40 Squadron at RNZAF Whenuapai. Australia was next on the list. Adelaide, Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane. Chris has covered it in detail, so I should just mention that everywhere we were looked after by the most thoughtful and entertaining hosts. When Chris was busy I took myself off to Art Galleries and other museums. We had time to stay with friends in Adelaide and Sydney. I mustn't forget to mention my first ever ride in a Chipmunk at Aldinga – so exciting! In Brisbane we stayed at the United Services Club which, like the Wellington Club, has so much history. Time spent looking at the pictures and photos which adorn the walls gives an insight into the history of the area. A busy few days which ended with a lovely lunch at the Sirromet Winery with our new friends, John, Gael, Tony & Meg. Hong Kong next. Phew. I haven't been to Hong Kong for thirty odd years. Some things haven't changed. That distinctive smell in Wan Chai Market and, within a few yards, some very

upmarket shopping. A memorable few days with visits to the Hong Kong Observatory, racing at Happy Valley, rides on the Star Ferry and a helicopter ride courtesy of the Government Flying Services.

Closer to home, I have very much enjoyed arranging ladies' visits during the year. In June we visited the Chelsea Physic Garden and in October the Charterhouse. On both days we were blessed with good weather apart from a very light shower at Chelsea which certainly didn't dampen our spirits. I have loved these days – meeting up with old friends, and always delighted to see new faces. There's just one left on the calendar which is Goldsmiths' Hall in February and I have been busy trying out all the pubs/restaurants in the area for lunch after the tour. Well, someone has to do it!

It has been a pleasure and a huge privilege to be the Master's Consort and it's certainly a year I shall never forget.

Paula leads the ladies around the Chelsea Physic Garden



From the Desk of the Director Aviation Affairs

Liveryman John Turner

2017 was the safest year ever with zero accidents and zero passenger deaths in commercial jet passenger operations¹. President Trump tweets this was because he had been "very strict" on "commercial aviation", but those more knowledgeable suggest it is more likely a statistical fluke and that neither regulation (nor strictness) can really eliminate human error. On the other hand, training in Human Factors can help everyone working in aircraft design, manufacture, maintenance, ground crew, flight crew or company management, to understand when we humans are most susceptible to make errors, and what form that error may take. Having accomplished the 2017 zero accident milestone, what we need in aviation now is more understanding, not more strictness. Unfortunately, the maxim that a safe flight needs a "safe aircraft operated in a safe environment by a safe crew, working to safe procedures, under safe management" was proved by the last (as I write) fatal commercial passenger jet airliner accident, when that aircraft ran out of fuel!

We should applaud the efforts of everyone that helped achieve the zero-accident record of 2017. It will undoubtedly have been the result of a number of unreported 'saves' by professional pilots routinely dealing with in-flight technical failures and by others in the operating chain. The media (and some in airline management who should know better) often down-play the importance of decision making by, and handling skills of, experienced pilots, yet it is largely because of those pilots that today's commercial world is as safe as it is. Spectacular pilot 'saves', such as the crew of transatlantic flight Air France 66 safely landing their A380 in Canada after an uncontained engine failure having left parts over Greenland, and the Gimli and Hudson river gliders, do attract media attention, but are swiftly forgotten amidst a media perception of 'routinely safe'

modern air travel.

We must not ignore 10 fatal accidents¹ in 2017 that are split equally between commercial cargo and commercial passenger (propeller aircraft) flights, and resulted in 44 crew and passenger fatalities, and (in a single accident) another 35 killed on the ground. The numbers are miniscule when compared with the global number of flights each year, but we still cannot afford to ignore any lessons they may offer; all occurred to crews that had departed in expectation of a safe flight, as we all do each time we fly.

The quality and quantity of information available on each accident varies, as you might expect, from 'was involved in an accident' in the Africa bush, to a well-documented too-high approach leading to false ILS glideslope capture, rapid descent under AP, AP reversion to 3 degree descent slope, late go-round attempt, and impact with rising terrain beyond the runway end in Kyrgyzstan; they include a single pilot on his fourth flight of the day apparently flying into mountains above and beyond the intended destination and another with two pilots impacting sharply rising ground just short of the runway in challenging weather conditions in Nepal. No lessons there? Almost certainly, these are only the tip of an air safety iceberg, and for each accident similar events are likely to have caused 10 serious incidents, 100 incidents and 1,000 minor incidents. Our challenge in aviation is to reveal and understand all the incidents before the eventual accident. This is not just an issue for commercial aviation: General Aviation suffers far higher accident numbers (averaging at least one fatal accident each month in the UK alone), so there must be a wealth of incident information there from which we could all learn. Open and honest reporting should be the default mode for all pilots, professional, leisure, (and drone), because it benefits everyone.

Everyone is responsible for air safety. This means telling others the things that happened to you, or relating the times you got things wrong (but got away with it) so that others can learn from them. As an inexperienced Royal Air Force pilot, I was clear that I would not be able to (make and) survive all the mistakes to which pilots are prone - so I needed to learn from and avoid others' mistakes. In those days (over 40 years ago) there was time to sit in the crew room and read about all the incidents and accidents occurring on my particular aircraft type. Today, aviation organisations should pride themselves on the ability of their pilot to raise reports without fear of retribution and in the interests of improving safety; a high number of reports is a good thing, because that allows management to understand where the potential safety fractures are, what must be done to fix them, and to monitor the effectiveness of any fix. It does require organisations to operate with a 'just culture' that encourages open and honest reporting (does yours?), and private pilots to be comfortable with exposing errors and incidents to their wider community (can you?). Everybody is responsible for air safety and managers, flight crew, maintainers, ground handlers and air traffic controllers are all part of that 'everybody.'

The public transport safety message, "See it - Say it - Sorted," encourages people to report suspect items; it would also be a good mantra to remind us always to report the lower level incidents we experience before someone else has the accident. That, together with a refresh of some human factors training could be a good way for us all to get through 2018 in good shape.

¹Aviation Safety Network statistics based on all worldwide fatal commercial aircraft accidents (passenger and cargo flights) involving civil aircraft certified to carry 14 or more passengers. If military transport aircraft and non-commercial flights of this category are included, total fatalities would be 230 in 24 fatal accidents, which is still the lowest number in modern aviation history.

² <https://www.eurocockpit.be/news/air-safety-see-when-iceberg-approaching>

Scholarships & Bursaries 2017

By the Honorary Editor

After the November 16th Court meeting at Cutlers' Hall, certificates were presented to the 2017 winners of scholarships and bursaries. Immediate Past Master Peter Benn stood in for the Master, who had just started his tour of the regions. After receiving their certificates the winners were greeted with acclaim by the Court. Afterwards they and their families joined Court members for dinner.

As usual, the winners' reports below indicate that their first steps down the aviation road have been a stimulating and rewarding experience.

BEN ROURKE

SIR SEFTON BRANCKER SCHOLARSHIP

I had the best summer of my life! Having always wanted to become a pilot, I had spent the summer training towards the final exam which I am happy to say I managed to pass without any problems, after some fantastic instruction from my instructor John at Crowfield. This scholarship has allowed me to gain my PPL at just 17 years old which is something I couldn't have possibly done without the support of the Air Pilots. Obtaining this scholarship will make a huge impact on my future, in pursuit of a career as an airline pilot. Firstly it will prove to recruiters that I am passionate and dedicated to the industry. It has also boosted me into the modular training routes, with already a substantial block of training completed on which I hope to build on in the coming years.

If I had to pick a highlight of my training it would be the solo cross country. Flying for 150nm to 2 different aerodromes, including an international one in my case, is testing. Having flown that trip without any problems, it was an indication of how much I had learned and gave me a great deal of confidence for the final parts of my training. The Air Pilots have been fantastic, and I cannot thank them enough for the support they have offered both financially and wisdom wise.

JONATHAN BRADFORD

THE AIR PILOTS BENEVOLENT FUND SCHOLARSHIP

I started my training at the end of June 2017 at Tayside Aviation in Dundee. I carried out my training in a Piper Warrior (PA-28-161). On my first day I met my instructor James Whitby, who gave me an introduction to Tayside, and with good weather that day, I had my first ever flight in a powered aircraft. Due to my previous glider flying experience, we completed the first few lessons fairly quickly as the weather was also on our side. My instructor and I managed to get three flights done each day over the first three days! The two days on my first week that I did not fly were used to start studying for the nine theory exams.

During my second week at Tayside I completed my first solo. Flying solo was an amazing experience. After completing my check flight, my instructor got out of the aircraft and went over to the control tower. It was a great flight, filled with a mixture of fear and excitement, and everything went well. Having now gone solo in both gliders and powered aircraft, it was a great feeling to have got that far and be trusted with flying an aircraft on my own. I also sat three of my nine exams, Air Law, Operational Procedures and Meteorology in those first two weeks. After my first solo I completed three more solo consolidation flights in the circuit before moving onto navigation. Training at Dundee was fantastic due to the limited amount of commercial traffic, but a lot of private jets on occasions. It was fun to be taxiing out to the runway in front of a Global Express private jet!

When sitting my exams, I found that on the one occasion I was too quick to sit it and therefore did not achieve the required mark to pass, so learning that I should have taken more time to consolidate properly the knowledge. However, thanks to the great ground school team at Tayside I passed it in the end. Finally, I reached the point of doing solo navigation, it was a lot of fun, flying around some of the local area as well as

flying further afield and seeing a bit more of Scotland. On many occasions throughout the navigation phase of training I found that weather was a large problem, and caused a lot of delays in my training as a result. However, I put this time to good use, studying for exams and taking a bit of time to relax as the training was very intensive and tiring.

After having spent a week at the UK Gliding Junior Nationals down in Gloucestershire, I was back up at Tayside to complete the last part of my training. After a late evening check flight to Cumbernauld and a flight over the new Queensferry Crossing through the Edinburgh CTR, the next day I got to do my Qualifying Cross Country. This consisted of going through the Leuchars MATZ and over many areas I have been to and flown over in gliders before. After a final solo navigation flight through the Edinburgh CTR in the evening to build up the last of my necessary solo hours, and the added bonus of completing all my exams, I got the same buzz as I did when I finished all my Higher exams. Having finished all the exams, I was booked in for my Mock Skills Test with a different instructor, which made me very nervous, and the flight did not go particularly well. However, in a way it was good that my mock test did not go so well, as it gave my instructor James an opportunity to review my skills and we had a lot to do in the 2hrs 30 mins revision time I had left. We completed both revision flights in one day; they were a massive improvement on my mock test which gave me a lot more confidence going into my General Skills Test.

My examiner was one of the commercial instructors at Tayside, so I was a little nervous, but he was very reassuring. I was given my route and off I went to plan. Unfortunately, I had to cancel the first attempt due to weather issues. The next day the weather was good, and I passed my skills test first time, albeit that the crosswinds and turbulence on finals were an added complication to the flight.

When the examiner said that I had passed, I was ecstatic and couldn't wait to tell my parents. Finally, all the hard work had paid off and I now have a PPL - all before I can drive a car! I made many new friends, as well as people I already knew whilst at Tayside and having a PPL is another step towards applying for the degree course at Tayside Aviation.

In the mean time I look forward to learning how to become one of the tug pilots at my gliding club, as it will be a great way to both build flying hours and gain more flying experience in an interesting way.

I would like to thank the Honourable Company of Air Pilots and the Air Pilots Benevolent Fund for supporting me in achieving a goal I would have otherwise taken a long time to achieve.

LEO TANG

TAG FARNBOROUGH AIRPORT SCHOLARSHIP

Since I was young I have always been an ambitious person, continuously looking for a challenge and striving to achieve the best of myself. Ever since I have had my first flight in the Grob Tutor with the CCF when I was 15, my focus has been pinned to conquer the sky.

I have set out to pursue my dream, started by graduating with a Masters degree in Aerospace Engineering at the University of Bristol. Shortly after university I had worked as an aircraft structure engineer specialising in wing design, which provided me with the financial basis to start my flight training in gliders with Bristol and Gloucestershire Gliding Club based in Nympsfield. I have enjoyed every moment of my gliding career and have graduated to cross-country flights. Meanwhile I have started working at NATS, which has exposed me to the operational side of the aviation industry; my aspiration of getting more involved with aviation soared.

Having researched the cost of a PPL course, I realised the next step could only be a fantasy. Until, that is, one day I read the poster of the Honourable Company of Air Pilots' PPL scholarship at my gliding club, which encouraged me to submit my application. Through a competitive selection process and interview at Cobham House in London,

I was very delighted to hear that I was awarded a place in the PPL Scholarship 2017.

I chose Phoenix Aviation based in Leen-Solent to complete my PPL training in a Piper PA28. I have been spoiled by the specular views of the South Coast while receiving top quality training from my instructor, who has guided me carefully throughout the training to develop top notch airmanship, aviation knowledge and flying skills. Additionally, I have had the pleasure to network with other experienced professional pilots as well as other aviation enthusiasts.

I was working with the PR team in TAG Farnborough Airport during my training, which provided me the unique opportunity to fly into Farnborough airport to meet their CEO and complete some filming. The video footage was later broadcast on the local ITV News.

Words cannot express my gratitude to the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, TAG Farnborough Airport, and those who supported me along my journey of flying achievements. Without their generosity, I would not have been able to come close to what I have achieved today. Having benefited from the astonishing scheme organised by the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, I am looking forward to the day when I can contribute to this great cause and assist future generations of talented and motivated young pilots.

LIAM BENNETT

GRAYBURN SCHOLARSHIP

It all started with an application. I was made aware of the scholarship by a previous winner, who has used his PPL to hour build, towing gliders, with the intention of going onto a CPL. I was invited to an interview at Cobham House in London and met a few of the other candidates. We sat the aptitude test and had a short interview. The next day, an email popped into my inbox, informing me I had been successful.

After confirming my choice of Booker Aviation, based out of Wycombe Air Park, I collected my course materials and had a tour of the facilities on a rainy mid-June day. I had my first lesson a couple of days later, when I was partnered with my instructor, Dickie Bird. Dickie

introduced himself and we talked about my previous gliding experience, the differences between powered and glider flight, before flying our first sortie in a Cessna 152, exploring the effects of the controls, climbing, descending and level flight before moving on to slow flight, stalling and circuits. The high calibre of instruction I received enabled me to progress swiftly to solo standard and after completing my Air Law exam, I flew my first powered solo after just over five hours of instruction. The feeling was fantastic, and after the obligatory picture, I was introduced to my second instructor, Mehran Molavi. Mehran took me for a check flight the next day, before clearing me to fly solo circuits. The fast pace of the training enabled me to progress quickly, something which would not have been possible without the scholarship!

After flying 2 hours in the circuit, I moved on to flying in the local area. This was good fun, and was an opportunity to practice more general handling. This is the first time I felt a sense of freedom, being able to decide what direction and height I wanted to fly. After I had completed the navigation and

meteorology exams, I moved onto the navigation exercises. The first dual navigation route we flew was Henley-on-Thames, Greenham Common, Grove and back to Wycombe. This was followed by another dual navigation exercise, this time to the North of Wycombe, before finally flying a random navigation and a diversion. Next, I flew these two navigation exercises solo - giving me 2 hours solo cross-country time.

I was finally ready to fly the dual qualifying cross country, the 150nm flight, with 2 land aways. Having flown numerous glider cross country flights solo, this certainly was different, with the focus on accurately staying on track, precise timekeeping and correct radio procedures. After flying Wycombe - Peterborough Conington - Wellesbourne Mountford - Wycombe dual, I was cleared to fly the route solo. I managed to book a Cessna for the following Sunday. The weather turned out to be perfect (unlike most of this summer), and I arrived early, having pre-planned the route, only needing to add the wind and to check NOTAMS. After obtaining PPR

and running through it with the instructor, I checked the Cessna out, filled it to the tabs, booked out, and was on my way. The turnaround at Conington needed to be fast, a quick visit to the tower to settle the landing fee and to get the QXC paper signed, then back to the aircraft to dip the tanks, then off to Wellesbourne. Enroute to Wellesbourne talking to Birmingham zone between the outbound airliners was certainly one of the highlights of the course! After a 50-minute cruise, I said goodbye to Birmingham zone, did an overhead join and was in the café enjoying a sandwich before I knew it.

After flying the QXC my logbook totalled 30 hours, so to build the rest of the hours, I flew a mixture of solo flights, dual navigation, instrument flying and other general revision. I was able to visit numerous different airfields, such as Sywell, Sandown, and Thruxton, in a variety of different, typically British weather conditions, which helped boost my confidence greatly. The flight down to Sandown certainly has to be recommended: apart from the fantastic service you can receive from Farnborough LARS West, the flight over Portsmouth harbour is absolutely stunning.

After 45 hours I was recommended for test by the examiner, Alistair Stevenson, with whom I'd passed my RT licence, which helped calm my nerves. He explained the format, gave me a route to plan and told me which Cessna we would be using. The route was Wycombe - Tower Farm - Broadway, with a diversion to be expected on the last leg. After a thorough walk around, we took off and started the navigation. The visibility was acceptable but quickly improved by the time we were on the last leg for the diversion. The diversion was to Holmbeck Farm, I produced a track, heading, distance and ETA. Then using Silverstone racing circuit and Turweston as landmarks, Wing disused airfield came out of the morning haze and the main runway pointed directly towards the small grass airfield of Holmbeck Farm. Happy with the diversion we went on to practice the general handling element of the test, before flying 3 circuits and a full stop. "Congratulations, that was very nice. I'm pleased to say you have passed".

I have many people to thank for the scholarship, for which I am truly grateful for. Firstly, Angie and the Scholarship Committee for organising and selecting me for the scholarship. Booker Aviation, and my instructors Mehran Molavi and Dickie Bird, for all their fantastic help and instruction. But especially Past Master of the Company, Michael Grayburn for funding the scholarship. I have spoken with the Chief Tug Pilot of the London Gliding Club, who is happy to coach me through the Sailplane towing rating and onto being a tug pilot. This will facilitate hour building, with the intention of continuing my training towards an fATPL next year.

ROBERT NORRIS

AIR BP STERLING SCHOLARSHIP

I completed my PPL training over the summer of 2017 at Cambridge Aero Club based at Marshalls Airport, Cambridge. In late June I arrived to pick up all of the scholarship material, including theory textbooks for 9 written exams, a sectional chart and nav equipment, and after a few delays due to weather had my first flight. The aircraft at CAC are the Cessna 172SP, a reliable and easy aircraft with great visibility due to the high wing, a great asset to have when the circuit gets busy near the end of the day. The first few lessons of the course are really fun, as you learn the basics of pure flying: climbing, descending and turning, with the instructor taking care of the radio and navigation. At the same time I began studying for the first theory exam: Air Law. Although slightly daunting at first, all of the information is interesting and overlapped with what I was already learning in lessons, and there were always instructors available to help if I had any problems.

As I progressed through the course, covering all general handling from slow flight to stalling, every hour I spent in the air was amazing fun, culminating with the chance to practice spinning in the CAC Extra 200 – a very different aircraft to the 172! After finishing the exercise, my instructor Sam showed me some aerobatics on the way back to Cambridge – aileron rolls, loops, a barrel roll and stall turns – thoroughly overcoming my initial hesitation towards negative G – and even a unique view of a US Air Force Osprey

tiltrotor that passed by.

The next major milestone of my PPL course was my first solo, after a long day's flying in G-UFCB on August 1st. Pushing forward the throttle for take-off, with no instructor next to me if anything went wrong, was an exhilarating feeling, and once the nerves had worn off I couldn't wait to get up again. As I had already flown the dual nav flights while waiting for my medical certificate, I was soon able to do so, flying from Cambridge up to the Norfolk coast and then again eastwards towards Wattisham. It was great to see some new and different places, and to push the Cessna up to cruise at 105kts! Following these I completed my first land-aways which – despite one minor hiccup with the nose-gear oleo at Conington – went really well. Having always flown with ATC from a large airport like Cambridge, it was really interesting to visit places with FIS and Radio services, which definitely give you a lot more responsibility when circuit flying. Everyone that I met at both Sywell and Conington was really friendly, not to mention the food was great, so I will definitely be returning sometime soon.

I had been really lucky for nearly all of the summer weather-wise, however as my QXC approached, it seemed that all of the slots I booked came with low clouds and rain, stopping all VFR flying out of Cambridge. However, due to some cancellations and fortunate timing, on Saturday 25th August I planned and then flew my qualifying cross country flight, a 150 mile loop from Cambridge heading west towards Northampton, north to Kings Lynn, west to Peterborough and then east back towards home, with stops at Sywell and Conington. The weather for flying that day was perfect, with no clouds and air as smooth as glass up to above 3000ft, and I even got the chance to watch the RAFA Blades display team over lunch during my first stop which was amazing. As my career goal is to become an airline pilot, it was great to experience planning and flying an extended route, with all the complications and decisions required along the way.

After finishing all the solo and dual hours required for the PPL, theory and FRTOL exams, and completing the practice skills

test, the last remaining requirement was the real thing. I was very nervous in the days leading up to it, as it had to be postponed a few times, however I made sure I was well prepared, practicing my practice forced-landings the day before and planning the route and weight and balance calculations. When the day finally arrived, the visibility was good with clear skies, but a challenging crosswind was blowing across the runway. We took off at 1045, and flew a navigation section eastwards, followed by a diversion, general handling and circuits to finish. I was very happy with how these went, and, despite a few bumpy landings in the circuits section, I was thrilled to hear that I had passed.

I cannot wait to do more flying with my PPL, and take my parents up on a long-deserved thank you flight over Cambridge! Going forward my plan is to apply to an integrated ATPL course after university and join an airline and having a private licence and some experience going in is sure to help. I am really grateful to the Honourable Company of Air Pilots and Air BP for providing me this amazing opportunity and the best summer of my life, and also to all the instructors and administrators at Cambridge Aero Club who were always on hand to help me out over the past few months, without whom this wouldn't have been possible.

My sincerest thanks again to Air BP and the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for this scholarship, I would have never thought 6 months ago that I would have a pilot's licence and the chance to learn to fly at 18.

SAM GRIFFITH

CADOGAN SCHOLARSHIP

Tuesday 2nd May started early. I woke at 4am and left Hereford by coach at 0530, London-bound for my PPL scholarship interview. Bus delays meant I arrived with 15 minutes to spare to grab a quick cup of tea. Later the same week I had an email informing me of my successful application. I was thrilled - I couldn't wait for my exams to finish and my summer of flying to begin. Without delay I arranged to meet my flight instructor Geraint at Shobdon Airfield to discuss the plan of action for the summer. Later the same day I met a friend to play

football and unfortunately broke my wrist. I ended up in A&E until 3am the next morning worrying about my forthcoming A-levels, whether I would get a Class 2 medical and if my flying scholarship had finished before even taking off! The future was painfully uncertain and this made me feel very apprehensive.

Thankfully at the end of my A-levels my cast was removed and I was able to pass my medical.

I started training a week after my final exam covering the basic elements of flight planning and preparation, such as how to pre-flight a Cessna. During my first lesson I was taught how to fly straight and level and trim accordingly - which seems very elementary now! Between flights I completed ground school and studied hard for the 9 flight examinations. A typical day would see me fly at 0900 and sometimes later in the afternoon. At the end of the second week with 4 exams passed and 10.6 hours logged, my first solo milestone arrived. This moment was over in under 10 minutes but will remain vividly with me, and also with my father, who was watching proudly from the control tower, for the rest of our lives. I was informed before my first solo circuit to focus on what was in front of me and not to look at the empty seat to my right. I also found it quite surprising how the aircraft handled differently as it was lighter with only myself on board.

Gradually I completed more and more solo time until I flew an hour of circuits. After this part of the training I moved onto steep turns with 45° bank angle. To my great surprise 2 RAF Hercules flew directly beneath us which is quite a sight when you are used to looking up to them at a couple of hundred feet. As part of the navigation training I visited Kemble, Wellesbourne, and Turweston where we took G-BHAA for a repaint and interior refurbishment. Completing my Qualifying Cross Country (QXC) to Leicester then Wellesbourne was a major step forward for me as I planned and controlled every aspect of the flight; I felt like a true pilot for the first time!

Nearing the end of September I had completed all the 45 hours of my training and was ready for the PPL skills test. As with any flight it heavily relies on

the weather. Unfortunately the poor British weather had meant a few of my booked tests were cancelled as I waited nervously for almost a week to put all my training to the test. On Thursday 28th September I woke and saw how perfect the day was for flying, I knew today was the day. I navigated north, just west of Shawbury's Military Air Traffic Zone (MATZ) to Ellesmere then through the MATZ and got diverted to Bridgnorth. Before long the navigation part of the test was over and we moved onto general handling and a few circuits nearing the end. My final landing came and I realised how quickly 2 1/4 hours had gone. I felt exhausted but accomplished, and was extremely relieved when Chris my examiner informed me I had passed. Chris gave me some constructive points for improvement in the debrief and I learnt a handful of things just from this flight. Ending with a strong sense of completion this concluded my amazing summer of flying at Shobdon.

I would like to give a huge thank you to the Cadogan Charitable Trust for the PPL funding, the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for this wonderful opportunity, and Herefordshire Aero Club for providing this intensive course with such support from the small community at the airfield.

I would especially like to thank Geraint my instructor for all the important lessons I have learned, the intensive ground school and some very early starts to get airborne!

I am greatly looking forward to starting my night rating, do some differences training on the 4 seater PA28, and take up my family and friends.

STANLEY SPARLING

AIR PILOTS BENEVOLENT FUND SCHOLARSHIP

Since childhood, all I have ever wanted to do was fly, for me the best part of the family holiday was the flight! I remember my first ever flying lesson which was a Christmas present from my grandparents, when I was aged 13. After that first flight my Instructor said to me that it is possible to get a Private Pilot's Licence at 17. From that moment on I was determined to get my PPL at that age. I started volunteering at Enstone airfield, helping

out with washing and refuelling aircraft as well as cutting the grass - just to be around aviation! However due to lack of fund getting my PPL was still a hurdle for me.

A friend at airfield who is a professional pilot understood my situation and recommended the HCAP PPL Scholarship to me, I saw it as an excellent opportunity that I could not afford to miss. And I'm glad I didn't miss it, the moment I received that email congratulating me was a feeling like no other! And I could not wait to finish my AS Level Exams.

Friday 9th June, the day after my final exam, I headed to Aeros Gloucester. I was introduced to the PA28-161, which is a fantastic trainer for anyone wishing to learn to fly. I was so happy to be back in the air. The course consisted of 45 hours of flight training and 9 theoretical exams. I quickly passed my Air Law and Operational Procedures in order to fly solo. 1st July 2017 was my first solo flight - a day that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

At the start of my navigation flying phase the weather was poor; however, it was the perfect opportunity to complete all my theoretical exams, which I passed first time. It was a big weight off my shoulders and now I could focus on doing my Qualifying Cross Country. This was the best flight I had ever done. Flying solo across the south of England, the route was Gloucester-Cardiff-Halfpenny Green-Gloucester. I really enjoyed flying solo, knowing that I was the pilot in command. I also had a great feeling every time I got out the aircraft, thinking "I Landed that!"

Then It was on to the finer details of flying -preparation for the skills test. I had a mock test and a brush up flight before the test itself. The actual test flight was fantastic - I really enjoyed it but by the end I was exhausted. The examiner congratulated me on passing after I put the mixture to idle cut-off and flicked the master off - I had reached my goal of gaining a PPL at 17!

The HCAP PPL Scholarship taught me more than just to fly: flight training was full of ups and downs, and developed me as a person. It taught me to believe that you can do anything you want if you put your mind to it. I am more motivated

than ever to pursue my dream to become a professional pilot. I would like to say thank you to all the staff at Aeros Flight Training, and to the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for this fantastic opportunity.

Thank you, I am forever grateful.

Gliding Scholarships

By way of background, 18 gliding scholarships were awarded in 2017, and they were flown at 3 clubs - London GC at Dunstable, Derbyshire and Lancashire GC at Camp Hill, and Portsmouth Naval GC at Lee-on -Solent.

AVISHKA DON

I was fortunate enough to take a part of the residential gliding course at Derby and Lancashire Gliding Club, thanks to the scholarship that I have been awarded from Honourable Company of Air Pilots. The application process was really exciting. Receiving the email stating that I was awarded a scholarship gave me a great joy in those stressful exam months. As the date neared I did some research about the club and their airfield at Camphill, discovering that they only use winches to launch their gliders, which made me more excited because most of my glider experience had been on the aero-tow.

On 13th I arrived at the club where everyone was very welcoming. My parents and I were able to have look around the airfield. I was so amazed by the landscape and starting to imagine how it would look once I am in the air. At 7 pm all the scholarship winners met in the briefing room for a safety brief as well as an explanation of the daily schedule.

As we started the week, first day we had

a late start due to bad weather, although we were able play around with the simulator. After that were put into two groups and one group were flying a K-13 with Pete as instructor, and the other group on a Puchacz with Dave. At the launch point we were all briefed how to launch a glider and other ground tasks.

On my first launch I was able to follow through the controls with my instructor - it was so different from an aero-tow that I used to. It felt like a fast and steep roller coaster ride. I was able to do the top part of the launch on the second day and the full launch on the third day. Once I was airborne Dave showed me around the airfield and the ridge for soaring. This was a great opportunity to practice coordinated turns. I didn't start that well although once I got the idea of ridge soaring and starting to perform better turns I was able stay up for longer. Another way we used to gain height was thermal soaring, although we only found thermals on the days we had sunny and cloudy weather. When we had enough height, Dave introduce me to stalls and spins and how to recover from them. Finally, he introduced me to circuits and landing.

An apprehensive Peter Bailey (donor of a scholarship) with Assistant Dacre Watson supervising. Is this a chariot of fire?



Warden John Towell presents certificates to the Camp Hill team





Peter Bailey congratulates his scholarship winners

When not flying, I learnt how to drive a tractor for retrievals.

After we put the gliders back to hangar we all meet up at the bar with the instructors to discuss about the day and fill out log books.

It was the best time I've had in this summer and once again thank you to the Air Pilots for organising this programme really well; and thank you for my sponsors, Air Pilots' London schools gliding. Finally thank you for all the members at the Derby and Lancashire Gliding Club for giving us such great time!

HOLLY BICKNELL

Spending the last week at the London Gliding Club has been one of the best experiences of my life so far. Through this scholarship I have managed to take to the skies twenty one times and perfect my gliding skills. I went into the week hoping to learn new skills as well as develop my old ones, which is exactly what I achieved. As well as becoming competent flying a glider I worked with many other members of staff getting to know the airfield and helping out as much as I could. The accommodation that was provided couldn't be faulted. The rooms were very well looked after and the kitchen staff were lovely and prepared amazing meals.

I would like to thank the London Gliding Club for having me for the week - I couldn't have enjoyed myself anymore.

JAMES BLACKBOURN

Receiving the news that I was fortunate enough to have been selected for a Gliding Scholarship was amazing and August quickly came around. It brought an intense week of gliding at Portsmouth Naval Gliding Club in which I had the pleasure of being with 5 other passionate and enthusiastic students. We had a group of fantastic instructors plus the luxury of glorious sunshine everyday. This was a recipe for an amazing week, and that it certainly was!

The week started with meeting our main tutor Dave who introduced us to everyone at the club and showed us around the airfield and grounds. From then on it was full steam ahead into a safety brief, and getting to know each other ready for our first day gliding where we would be working as a team. We all stayed together at the clubhouse and became part of a great community by the end of our scholarship.

The first day began at 0645 and that set the precedent for the rest of the week. There was a core team of instructors, including Chris, Graham and Ben who came in everyday to take us gliding in the ASK-21. On the first day to say I was excited, but a bit nervous, was an understatement! For my first flight I was aero towed to 2000ft getting a quick go on the controls behind the tug. I then got straight into practising gliding straight and level and making coordinated turns as well as flying the approach into landing. By the time I had touched down I was smiling from ear to ear, and the team all had the same feeling after their first flight.

As the days flew by our skill level improved and our love for gliding did also. In addition to the gliding we were lucky enough to have a chef to help us cook our meals. This meant we could all eat and talk about the day together at the dinner table. Every evening we would invite guests to our meals, whether it be our instructors, club members, current serving pilots, or guests with aviation based careers for us to learn about their journey and what is involved in their dream job.

This made me and the rest of the team feel part of a brilliant community and that was enforced on the third day. A club member, Nigel, came and flew us in his



Prior to launch at Camp Hill

de Havilland Gipsy Moth over Portsmouth Harbour, the Isle of Wight and the Spinnaker Tower with the chance to take control and fly the open cockpit 1930 aircraft - fantastic. Living locally meant that the chance to take a navigational flight in the Grob 109 self launching motor glider was great. I was able to see my local area and where I would normally go walking with my family and dog.

Gliding above the Solent and having a view over the beaches towards the Isle Of Wight was breath-taking and really made every flight special. I was constantly learning and everyone agreed that there was so much to take in. We all thrived in this environment and shared what we had been taught in each flight.

By the end of the week three of the team, Stephen, Joe and Will had gone solo, and soon after on the following Wednesday I went up on my own! Returning to the club was something that I had to do as I loved it too much so the following week I spent every gliding day building on what I had learned and going properly solo on both aerotow and winch.

The week ended with an awards evening and buffet for all our family to meet our wonderful instructors and special guests including the Mayor, Club Chairman and the Past Master of the Honourable Company Of Air Pilots. I am incredibly thankful to everyone involved in making the Scholarship possible and will carry this experience with me for the rest of my life. It was a truly inspiring week and I would love to help others in the future come together and enjoy the aviation experience that I was lucky enough be a part of at Portsmouth Naval Gliding Club. Thank You!

JOSEPH WILDMAN

During August 2017 I was lucky enough to be awarded a week of gliding through the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, funded by the Air Safety Trust. This took place at the Portsmouth Naval Gliding Club at Lee-on-the-Solent. From a young age it has been my goal to be a pilot. I can even remember Concorde flying over my house on one of its final flights in 2003. I spent a lot of time researching scholarships after a post on my Air Cadet squadron's page, and I was keen to try gliding as it was something I hadn't experienced before. Before this scholarship I'd only had three flying lessons and never had any exposure to gliding.

After I received an email notifying me that I'd been successful, I was ecstatic and counted down the days until the start date arrived. After a short two hour train journey from Bristol and a rendezvous with Stephen, a fellow course member, I arrived at Daedalus.

On the first full day all the course members helped get the gliders out of the hangar and we got them swiftly out to the launch point. Before I knew it was time for my first flight. The instructor carried out the aero-tow launch and handed me control after we had disconnected from the tug at 2000 feet. He showed me the basic controls with some upper air work as we had caught a thermal. From the air the Solent looked amazing, and the views of Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight were spectacular. He explained the circuit and the radio calls he was using to communicate with the tower. After a 20 minute flight I was back on the ground and left startled at what an amazing flight I had just experienced.

Assistant Tricia Nelmes with Peter & Jill Bailey, and Assistant Dacre Watson with Dunstable students



On the following days I experienced many different launches - including winch launches which were a lot faster paced than the aero-tow. One of the many highlights of the course was being taken up by Luke, another instructor, for an extended 45 minute flight. We gained considerable height due to strong thermals - allowing sufficient height to fly spectacular aerobatics including loops, stalls, and steep turns. The following day the entire group were also incredibly lucky to fly in a vintage 1930 Gypsy Moth, owned by a BA captain - an added bonus. Lee, a Flybe Dash 8 Q400 Captain, also took me up for two flights in the Grob 109 motor glider. On the second of these flights we flew just over HMS Queen Elizabeth as the carrier had just arrived into port.

On the fifth day I practiced doing the flight by myself with the instructor making no inputs. After doing this I practiced a cable break- the release was pulled at 400 feet and we made a swift turn back to the airfield and landed parallel to the runway. The instructor was then happy for me to go solo. This was an incredible experience - I felt an enormous sense of responsibility flying a £100,000 glider by myself. I thoroughly enjoyed the flight. To top off what was an amazing week, on the final evening I was lucky to be awarded 'best pilot'.

I learned an incredible amount from the course, all of the club members were highly knowledgeable and bursting with advice on how to pursue a pilot career. I'd like to thank the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for allowing me to experience such an unforgettable course that will greatly help me in my future aviation career. I would also like to thank the Air Safety Trust who

IPM Peter Benn with a gliding scholarship winner at Lee-on-Solent



generously offered funding for me to do the course and Dave Howell, the course manager. He took really great care of us during the week and passed on a lot of his knowledge and advice. All of the instructors also did an incredible job developing our flying skills, they gave up a lot of their free time and some even took time off work to instruct on the Course. I also pass my thanks to Lee Allinson, and to Nigel Reid, the BA 747 Captain for the Gypsy Moth flight. I would also thank the tug pilots, without them we would not have flown anywhere near as much. Finally, I would like to thank everyone at Portsmouth Naval Gliding club, the Chairman and the CFI, for their amazing hospitality during the week.

The course was a week that I will never forget.

JOSHUA CLEGG

The week started with arrival at Derbyshire and Lancashire gliding club on the 13th of August and we got settled down and unpacked before a couple of hours briefings. The morning after we all woke up around 0630 and prepared for breakfast and morning flight briefings. The days were structured the same throughout the week as the gliding club works off consistency which made sure everyone knew their roles and how to perform them. Furthermore, the first flight was at c. 0900 and we flew for 8 hours each day. The scholarship winners were split into two individual groups of 3 and flew 2 different types of gliders, these being the K13 and the Puchatz.

Each day the skills of each individual developed as we progressed through steady flight into stalling and slow flight.

IPM Peter Benn with the proud PPL scholarship winners



These were all great skills we learned, and progression was brilliant from all individuals.

The groups averaged 3 flights each day and the weather was amazing with the odd quick rain shower every couple of days. Additionally, the HCAP gliding scholarship gave me so much experience and has helped me on my journey to becoming a fast jet pilot in the RAF. I cannot thank the Company enough for all it has done and 10 hours flying experience was such a privilege.

MATTHEW AMESBURY

During the last week of the summer holidays I underwent a week's gliding course in the Derbyshire and Lancashire gliding club. I have always wanted to be an airline pilot and next year I plan to study aerospace engineering at University; I found this scholarship online and thought that it would be an amazing experience whilst also helping me with my career plans. I submitted my application form and hoped to be invited for the interview. A few weeks later I received an email inviting me to the interview in London, I took a day out of school and travelled to London with my mum, I felt a little nervous going in as it was my first interview but after a while I was fine. When I received the email to inform me that I had been accepted I was over the moon.

On the first day of flying we were introduced to our instructor for the week, David Bailey: he talked us through the various health and safety aspects involved with the airfield, and showed us how to move the glider around whilst it was on the ground. We were then shown the glider that we would fly during the week, the Puchacz. After this it was time to fly! I was the first person to fly that day, I was walked through the pre-flight checks and introduced to the aircraft's controls. In no time, we were ready for take-off. We were winch-launched to around 1000ft, perfect for me to learn the basics of controlling the glider. That day I flew four times with an overall flight time about an hour.

On the second day, I managed to fly twice. During these flights, I learnt about ridge soaring whilst perfecting the basic controls of the glider. Midway through the week I was really enjoying the course

and began to practice stalling exercises. I flew five times in total and covered all types of stalls including stalling with a wing drop. As you can imagine, after these exercises I was feeling quite light headed however I thoroughly enjoyed every moment of it.

On Thursday, I also flew five times and began to handle the top half of the launch. On the second flight, I flew the circuit and lined the glider up with the airfield ready to land. On the last two flights that day I had the chance to fly a different aircraft, the K13, it was very interesting to see the difference between the way it handled compared to the Puchacz. The final day arrived and I was feeling quite sad that it was nearly over, however I was also excited for the day ahead. I managed to fly a further four times that day bringing the total flight time up to just under five hours. On that day, I attempted the approach and landing three times with assistance from Dave. On the final flight of the week, Dave demonstrated a spin in the glider which was great fun.

Over the course of the week I learnt so much in such a short space of time. It was an incredible experience that will never be forgotten. I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone at the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for giving me this opportunity, Paul Nicholas for sponsoring my course, the Derbyshire and Lancashire Gliding club for accommodating me and Dave Bailey for being such a fantastic instructor - without any of you this couldn't have been made possible. I really am very grateful and know that this opportunity will help me for the years to come.

MYLES RICHARDS

In the last week of August I was on an intensive gliding course at London Gliding Club at Dunstable. I found this opportunity from a website called <http://www.slenky.me/shots>. Once I applied through slenky they sent me the forms for The Honourable Company of Air Pilots, which I filled out and submitted after making sure it was perfect. I then went to the interview in London with my parents. I was a bit nervous but reassured myself that I would be fine since I had prepared for it. A week later I got the fantastic news that I was

selected and it meant the world to me!

On arrival at the Club I met Maria, who was also on the course, and Andy Zuchora who was my gliding instructor. We then started off the day by having a safety briefing, after that we went to the airfield and did a DI (Daily Inspection) on the Glider and towed it over to the launch point. I then was aero towed to 4000ft and started learning basic controls with the stick and the rudder and trying to find thermals while also looking out for other aircraft. The weather that day was good so we had a good number of flights.

Unfortunately, on Wednesday 30th of August it rained from 1100 onwards so we couldn't do any flying for safety reasons; we relaxed in our cabin and read some of the gliding books our instructor let us borrow.

On Thursday 31st we had a good day of flying due to the weather. In my flights, I was improving my turns and also my co-ordination skills and learning how to climb in a thermal. I also did my first winch launch which was really amazing as everything happens so quickly!

Friday 1st September sadly arrived and it was our last day at the club. We did our DI's and began the day with winch launches. After following through the first time and understanding what to do, I was allowed to do a winch launch by myself. There were mixed emotions as I was excited but at the same time I didn't want to mess up! I ended up doing a winch launch successfully and that was one of the best experiences I had throughout the scholarship. We then had the sponsors come for lunch with us in the club house and then present us our certificates. Carrying on with our flights, I practised how to land, and finally did so.

I feel as though throughout this course my coordination skills improved massively and I have gained so much experience and knowledge - it has focused me on my dream of becoming an airline pilot. I would like to say a massive thank you to the Honourable Company of Air Pilots for giving me the once in a lifetime opportunity and Andy for Instructing me, and Maria and London Gliding Club for having us. I feel very honoured and I will remember this for years to come.



IPM Peter Benn with the Flying Instructor scholarship winners



IPM Peter Benn with the 2017 Bursary winners



Warden Nick Goodwyn congratulates two of the tyro instructors at the reception

OLIVER WILLIAMS

I applied for an Honourable Company of Air Pilots gliding scholarship early in 2017. The application form was quite straightforward and I was very pleased when I was invited to attend an interview at the HCAP offices in London. This was the most worrying stage for me but after a minute or two, I realised I should just relax and be myself. From there on the interview seemed to go well as we discussed my interests and career plans. I am hoping to study aeronautical engineering at university, and knowing how to fly aircraft will definitely help when building them. I have already built several drones and model aircraft so I am learning all the time. I expected to wait a few days to hear whether I had been awarded a gliding scholarship but was delighted to receive an email the very next day to let me know that I had been successful.

My gliding scholarship was scheduled to take place at the London Gliding Club (LGC) near Dunstable from 14 – 18 August. On arrival at the Club I met Holly, who had also been awarded a HCAP scholarship, and our instructor for the week, Trevor. He assessed how much flying we had already done and what to focus on throughout the week. I was issued with a gliding logbook to record my flights and we were shown the glider we would use for the week – an ASK-21, registration G-CKEJ.

I had done a couple of previous glider flights – one at Lee-on-Solent in an ASK-21 and one at RAF Syerston during an Air Cadet aerospace camp. Both of these were using an aero-tow so I knew roughly what to expect.

On the first day I completed three flights on aero-tow using a Robin 180 tug plane. I spent over an hour in the air that day practising general handling, thermalling, turning, speed control and landing. When I wasn't flying I helped retrieve gliders from the landing area. I was very tired by the end of the day!

The next day we started using a winch to launch the glider. Accelerating from stationary to around 80 knots in a few seconds was amazing but I soon got used to it. We used the winch for the rest of the scholarship time and each day developed our gliding skills further. We were very lucky as the weather for the whole week was good and I was able to fly every day. Trevor had planned to cover spinning and stalling on the final day but the cloud base was too low. We needed a minimum of 4,000 feet for these exercises.

By the end of the week I had completed 20 launches and over 6 hours of gliding. The whole scholarship was fantastic and I am incredibly grateful to the Air Safety Trust who kindly financed my HCAP gliding course at LGC. Trevor was a great instructor and everyone at Dunstable welcomed Holly and I warmly to their Gliding Club. I hope that I can return to LGC again in the future to continue working towards my first solo flight.

RICK MARTIN

During the summer of 2017, I was fortunate enough to successfully obtain a week's worth of gliding from The

Honourable Company of Air Pilots (HCAP) at Portsmouth Naval Gliding Club (PNGC).

I have had an interest in engineering from an early age. Through joining the air cadets, I found that I preferred the aeronautical side of engineering and decided on this career path.

The process of obtaining the scholarship was an exciting but worrying time as I applied quite early on so I had to wait a while before I heard anything from HCAP. However, when I received the email asking me to attend an interview in London at their head office I was over the moon and couldn't wait for the date to come around. After the interview, I had about a week's wait to learn the result during which I completed part of my Gold DofE award. When I found out that I had received a scholarship I was over the moon and couldn't wait to get all my forms signed and returned to confirm my place.

On the first night at PNGC, we gathered around 1700 hours for the safety briefing and a view around the K21 gliders that we would be using for the week.

My first flight consisted of an aerotow. For my first flight, I showed them my prior knowledge (very little in gliders) so they could work out where to start me with the lessons to make the most of the time. During my first flight, we were airborne for over 15 minutes and we managed to get more than halfway over the Solent before having to turn back to have enough height to land back at the airfield.

As the week progressed we also had a go at some winch launches which involves the winch driver accelerating the aircraft to 60mph in around 3 seconds. They said that it was fast but I was never expecting it to be that fast. The acceleration isn't far from the acceleration of an F1 car. You then go up at about a 75-degree angle to approximately 1000ft depending on the weather conditions and the winch driver's confidence.

I learned a lot through the week's course from the pre-flight checks to the way the glider functions and navigates the circuit round the airfield. Unfortunately, we lost a total of a couple of days due to weather and a NOTAM regarding HMS Queen Elizabeth coming into Portsmouth Harbour. However, because we couldn't

fly we had a morning trip to see the aircraft carrier's arrival and then continued gliding as soon as the NOTAM ended at 1200.

I would like to thank the members that assisted us with our week, our instructors, Dave who took the week to spend time with us and supervise us 24/7, everyone at HCAP for allowing me this opportunity, as well as my sponsors at The Air Safety Trust to allow me to have the funding for this week.

Although I didn't quite achieve my solo wings I am hoping to achieve them in due course. The experience is truly treasured and hopefully one day I will be able to return as an instructor to allow others to have the same opportunity I have had.

STEPHEN DALY

I'm not too sure how to express how grateful I am, but even if I could, words would not justify it. From the most sincere part of me, thank you so much for giving me this opportunity to meet such wonderful people in diverse fields of aviation, and also, to share my experiences with five of the nicest people I could imagine.

When I was there, it was easy to take the week for granted, but now, since I am home, I truly appreciate the value of the course that the Honourable Company of Air Pilots has facilitated for me. The week taught me to refine various disciplines that otherwise would not have been possible. The first one that immediately comes to mind is teamwork. There's an old saying that my teacher always recites, "Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success". I cannot find another quote that is as relevant as this, that sums up the whole week. From getting up in the morning at 0600, to pulling out the ASK-21's from the hangar, to holding the gliders wings level, we all had to rely on each other to deliver the highest standards of safety. Teamwork interlinks closely with persistence and determination.

There is one profound development in my character, that I believe has exceeded my expectations, and that is confidence. If someone was to tell me aged eight, that I would be flying solo before I could drive, I wouldn't have believed them. But

when my instructor Chris, said, "Right, are you ready to go on your own?", I was not fazed. That moment when I released the cable at 1500ft, and I looked over my shoulder to see Chris not in the back, is something I will hold close to me for the rest of my life. Fortunately, I was able to do another solo on the last day!

I met so many influential people at the club, from Peter Benn to Dave Durston. I am sure you are quite busy, so I don't want to waste any more of your time. Again Angie, I am truly grateful to everyone involved, in making my dream job one step closer!

MELISSA BROOKS

JACKSON SCHOLARSHIP

I was lucky enough to gain the Jackson PPL scholarship in 2018. This provided me with the opportunity to learn to fly at Andrewsfield Airfield, Essex and to gain my PPL from scratch. I am studying chemistry, maths and physics at A-level, and have Russell Group University offers to study for a MEng in Aeronautical Engineering. I hope to continue a career in aviation engineering and use my newly gained pilot's licence to teach others in my spare time, and inspire future young people like myself to start a career in aviation.

The scholarship has given me an opportunity I never would have otherwise had and I am very grateful to the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, Mr Jackson, and to my instructors at Andrewsfield for providing me the resources to do this (and of course to the wonderful café at Andrewsfield for providing me with more bowls of cheesy chips than I care to count!).

My training began after my AS level exams in the summer of 2017, balancing school work and flying for the first few weeks. I flew the Cessna 152 (and despite being a tiny aircraft, being only 5'2 I still needed a cushion to see over the nose!). I then spent the whole of my summer holiday at the airfield, often flying for three hours a day but I really enjoyed it. I met many interesting people and instructors during my many lessons and while waiting around for a weather front to pass. I picked up the basic skills relatively quickly and progressed through the early part of the practical syllabus at a good pace. When I wasn't flying I was

learning the ground school syllabus, and passed all by the end of the summer holiday. Unfortunately the summer was unsurprisingly very British and I lost many planned hours due to poor weather, which, as any pilot knows, is an occupational hazard. But I powered through the disappointment and continued my training. I found the general handling to be very enjoyable and quickly progressed to the circuits. I spent many hours perfecting my circuits and became able to rattle off my checks in record time, even if my instructor struggled to follow them! I practised a lot of crosswind landings, due to the nature of the summer wind!

My first solo was invigorating and unexpected - as it is often the instructor's choice to keep you in the dark about when they plan to leave you alone for the first time! I now have a painting of the exact plane I did it in on my wall! Not long after my first solo I moved onto the cross countries and very much enjoyed landing at new airfields, particularly the tarmac runways of large international airports such as Norwich and Southend, however stressful it may be - knowing there are people waiting to go on holiday behind you! I did two solo short cross countries, the first was over the Chelmsford area, which I know well from the ground but was very different from air. The second was towards Ipswich and all went to plan, despite very misty conditions. However my first solo land-away took an unexpected turn. It had been many weeks since I had landed at this particular aerodrome due to unsuitable weather and I unfortunately was unable to find this small airfield to start with. I had been relying too much on the feature I expected to see to identify it and not on my timings! I however was very close to it and pretty much just looking the wrong direction! I landed successfully and made it back to Andrewsfield without any issue. My second cross country and my qualifying both went without any problems, having learnt from my mistake. It wasn't then too long after this that I took my test and passed first time!

This has been an amazing experience that I could only have dreamed of before I gained the scholarship. I encourage anyone interested to apply, and who knows where it could get you!

Duncan Simpson

By the Honorary Editor, Photos via Pat Malone

The full life of Past Master Duncan Simpson OBE CEng FIMechE FRAeS, who died in December, cannot go unrecorded.

Duncan Simpson's aviation career began when he won a place at the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School. Progressing from the training workshops to the Experimental Department, his work included the DH108, the Ghost Vampire and the later developments of the Mosquito and Hornet. Completing the four-year Aircraft Design Course, Duncan became an Associate Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society, winning the prize for the best final year apprentice. This provided an excellent grounding for his future test pilot career.

At the end of his apprenticeship he joined the Royal Air Force, where he learned to fly on the Prentice, Harvard, and Meteor, before beginning a tour on 222 Sqn flying the Meteor 8. After two years his considerable flying skills were recognised, and he was posted to the Day Fighter Development Squadron. This unit was involved in the introduction into RAF service of the new transonic fighters of the early Fifties, operating Sabres, Swifts, Venoms and Hunters; Duncan presciently chose the Hunter on which to specialise. In 1954, Neville Duke – then Chief Test Pilot at Hawkers – said he urgently needed Duncan as a Hunter test pilot, and so he left the RAF to begin his long association with Hawker aircraft.

Flying his Hawker desk



Duncan was initially engaged on a busy schedule of production test flying of the Hunter, but gradually became more involved in development work, making a significant contribution to the huge success of the Hunter. The advent of the revolutionary VSTOL concept added a whole new dimension to Duncan's test flying. He was the third pilot to fly the P1127 and, when it became the Kestrel, he trained the nine multinational pilots for the Tripartite evaluation squadron. He conducted extensive experimental flying to develop it into the Harrier, and was then fundamental to its successful introduction to RAF service, and its subsequent adoption by the USMC (as the AV8B).

In 1970, Duncan was promoted to Chief Test Pilot at Hawker and, in addition to the considerable ongoing development of the Harrier, he saw the Hawk through from drawing board to first flight in 1974. He demonstrated this machine at Farnborough just 10 days later, and delivered the first example to the RAF in 1976, where it has been in use, as a trainer and by the Red Arrows, for over 36 years. Duncan was made a Fellow of the Red Arrows – prestigious recognition as 'Godfather' of the Hawk. His contribution to industry continued after he finished test flying in 1978 when, for the next 15 years, he was the Deputy Director of the SBAC. During this time, he was responsible for all its exhibitions, including the Farnborough Air Show.

Kitted up for the Meteor in 1952



Celebrating 1m Hawk hours at RAF Valley

Duncan was, naturally, central to the development of the two seat Harrier. At that time the complex fuel system of the Harrier was prone to Foreign Object blockages, and Duncan endured one on a flight from Boscombe whilst at reasonably low level. As hurried relight attempts failed, Duncan pointed it to the unpopulated Salisbury Plain; with true TP courage he stayed with it as long as possible – later drily commenting "a two seat Harrier full of fuel is not the best glider" – he trimmed the aircraft to give the softest landing possible to save the evidence of what had failed, and only ejected at around 100' (this was the first use of the Martin Baker Mk 9 seat), momentarily risking landing in the fireball. At that time, protruding cutter blades beside the seat headbox were thought to be sufficient to punch

With the Strathallan Hurricane



through the Harrier's thick canopy. This empirical test proved they were not, and Duncan's neck was broken and his throat badly injured.

Upon retirement from Hawker Duncan remained extensively involved in aviation, displaying (and helping to preserve) vintage aircraft such as the Lysander, Sea Fury, Hart and Hurricane PZ865 (the "Last of the Many"). Duncan was an active member of the then Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators, and had a successful year as Master in 2002-3. He was a founder member of the Historic Aircraft Association, and was heavily involved in setting out its principles and objectives. Duncan contributed to the establishment of the display pilot register and the display authorisation system eventually adopted by the CAA. He was variously Chairman and a Vice President of the HAA, and offered advice and guidance on a range of issues affecting historic aircraft ownership, restoration, and display flying.

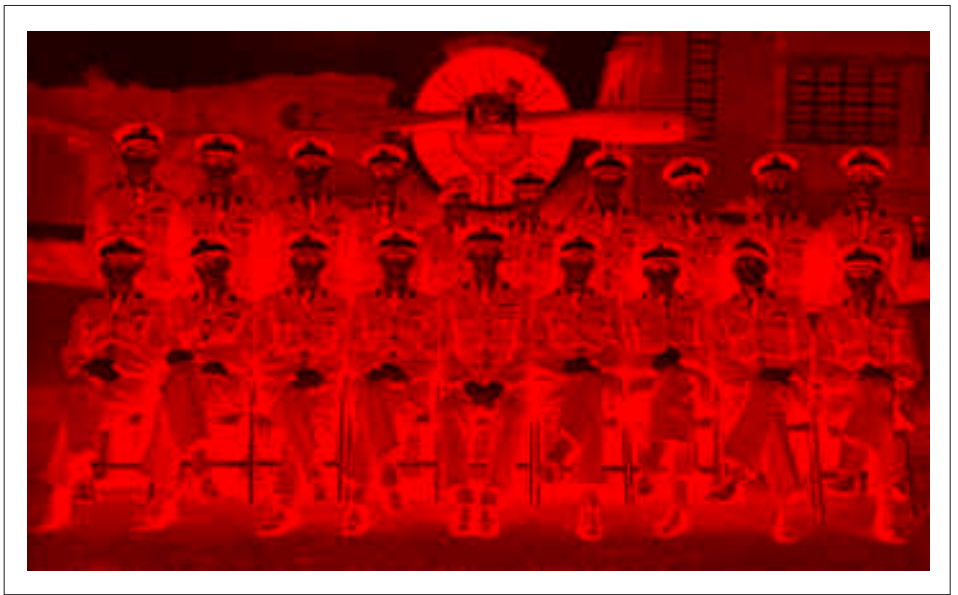
Past Master (and HAA Chairman) Wally Epton recalls: "I first met Duncan when he handed over Hurricane PZ865 to us in the BBMF at Coltishall in 1972. Duncan always wanted to know what was happening, and quizzed me periodically on HAA Council matters. Duncan's wisdom, knowledge and experience have been of great value to me personally over the past 45 years and I feel that it is important to continue the work he began."

Duncan Simpson's honours include: the Honourable Company of Air Pilots' Derry and Richards Medal (1971/2), and the Award of Honour (2011); the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air; the OBE; the Air League Founders' Medal; and the Royal Aeronautical Society's Alston Medal.

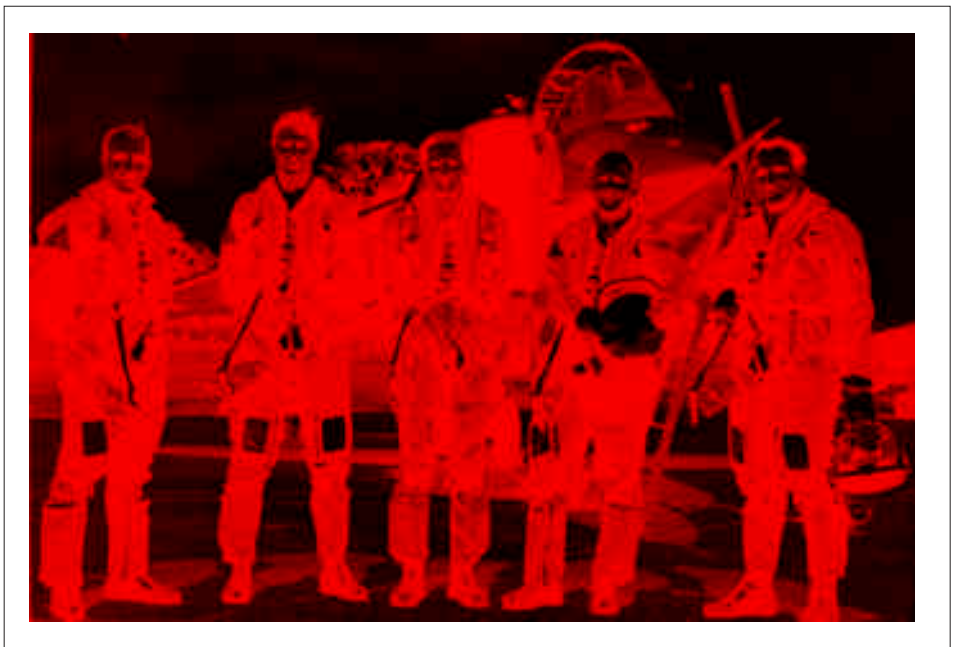
There is little doubt Duncan was held in high regard by his peers; he played a central role in the development of Britain's last military single-seat jets; his wise counsel will be greatly missed by the industry, the Company and the HAA.

A Memorial Service will be held on Tuesday 24th April. Further details will be available in due course.

With grateful thanks to Assistant Richie Piper, Past Master Wally Epton, and the HAA.



32 Course Ternhill (DS centre front)



The Harrier development team

The Harrier team 30 years on





With Prince Charles in 1972



With Neville Duke



*With his family at
Dunsfold August 1967*



Flying the P1127 - June 1963

The wrecked Harrier



Receiving the Award of Honour



The Air Pilots Benevolent Fund

By Warden John Towell

The Benevolent Fund was founded in 1937 as a direct result of the actions of the Guild's first Master, Air Vice Marshal Sir Sefton Brancker, who was killed in the R101 airship accident. In his will he gave all his manuscripts to a friend who passed them on to Lawrie Wingfield, then Clerk of the Guild. Royalties from the Brancker memoirs provided the first capital for the Sir Sefton Brancker Memorial Benevolent Fund which was set up in his memory. The fund was later renamed the Guild of Air Pilots Benevolent Fund, and again in February 2012 when the Guild became the Honourable Company, the fund was renamed The Air Pilots Benevolent Fund (APBF).

APBF is a registered charity regulated by the Charity Commission under the Charities Act 2011. The primary objective of the fund is the relief of poverty of current or former commercial professional Air Pilots or Navigators who are British subjects, also Liverymen, Upper Freemen, or Freemen of the Honourable Company of Air Pilots. In addition APBF helps with the relief of poverty of their widows and the education of orphans. APBF also supports the aviation development of young people. The fund provides a bursary at City University, support for the Air Pilots Schools Gliding, the Fleet Air Arm Officers Association gliding scholarships and PPL scholarships. Trustees have also made grants to the London Air Ambulance and the Flying Scholarships for Disabled People charity.

The Trustees of the APBF meet quarterly to review cases, and to decide future expenditure with due regard to funds available and the urgency of the request. Whilst the granting of assistance

necessarily requires deliberation, there are instances where immediate grants may be sanctioned. To ensure that applicants are given the best possible assistance the Trustees liaise closely with BALPA, the RAF Benevolent Fund, SSAFA, the Royal British Legion, the Officers' Association and similar organisations. Co-operation such as this ensures that efforts are not duplicated, and that the expertise of these full time professional organisations is best utilised. The Trustees can call upon the services of other professionals, such as doctors, to assist in the decision making process, thus ensuring that when assistance is given it will be of long-term use to the individual. Grants and loans are and can be made to assist in the rehabilitation of people after accidents, or enable them to regain licences.

Anyone in need of help, or knowing of someone who could be, is encouraged to apply in the first instance on an Application for Assistance Form to the Almoner of the Fund, through the Company offices. This form should be filled in as comprehensively as possible to enable the Trustees to assess the needs of the individual, and obtain a thorough understanding of their financial status, and just how the Fund could best help. For immediate assistance where time has an important bearing on the nature of the request, one of the Executive Committee should be contacted through the Company's offices.

Diligent management of the Fund's assets has ensured a good return from investments, but as with similar organisations, returns are dependent on the global financial situation. There is a steady increase in the regulation of financial bodies and charities. In recent

months APBF has registered with the information commissioner's office (ICO) under the Data Protection Act. New data protection legislation, (GDPR 2), will come into force in May 2018, and APBF will be revising and updating data protection and information handling policies and practices before that date. APBF has also applied to register for legal entity identifier, (LEI), through Quilter Cheviot our fund manager, to satisfy another regulation coming into force in January 2018. Vacancies for new trustees are advertised in Air Pilot magazine and those interested in becoming a trustee can contact the Chairman to declare an interest at any time. Prospective APBF Trustees are approved by the Court but are appointed by the existing Trustees. The company website has more information about the Benevolent Fund, and its history.

For those who feel generous enough to make a donation or require information relating to bequests in wills, please contact the Treasurer. The support provided by regular giving from members makes a real difference and helps to change lives for the better. A future appeal for donations from Freemen and Liverymen will be managed through the Learned Clerk, and cover all of the company charities. The ebullient Freddie Laker became Chairman of the Benevolent Fund in 1968 and set about fund raising. He had some novel ideas including, when airborne in one of Laker Airways' aircraft, taking over the PA and extolling the skill of the crew. He then put forward the case for the Fund to the bemused passengers whilst encouraging them to donate, with some success!



MARITIME PATROL: narrowing the capability gap

by Upper Freeman Andrew Roberts

There has been widespread recognition that SDSR10 effectively reduced the fighting effectiveness of the UK armed forces by about 30%. While the media have understandably focussed primarily on manpower constraints on the Army and Navy, discussion of RAF matters beyond questions about the forthcoming F-35B has been relatively limited. Nevertheless, unless the Chancellor is prepared to allocate additional funding to Defence, further cuts for all three Services are inevitable.

As far as the RAF is concerned, it has generally been assumed that the effects on the UK's maritime posture of the cancellation of the planned nine Nimrod MRA4 maritime patrol aircraft (MPA) in SDSR10 have been corrected by the inclusion of nine P-8 Poseidon MPA in SDSR 15. In my opinion, this is not the case, and any reduction in overall MPA numbers is of strategic concern. A review of the situation may be of interest to readers.

THE NIMROD

A total of 46 Nimrod MR1s were built for the RAF, but by 1985 the MPA force had been reduced to 33 MR2s. For various reasons (mainly financial and accidents), the force was progressively further reduced so that by 1999 it stood at only 21 aircraft.

Meanwhile in 1996 BAe had been awarded a contract to convert 21 MR2 airframes to become the Nimrod 2000 (later renamed Nimrod MRA4). However, following a series of defence budget savings measures, the size of the planned force was progressively cut; immediately prior to cancellation in

SDSR 10, it had been reduced to only nine aircraft.

Following the grounding of the Nimrod MR2 in March 2010 (for in-year budgetary reasons) and the cancellation of the Nimrod MRA4, the UK was left without any MPA in service. The decision in SDSR 15 to reinstate the MPA role by acquiring nine P-8s will be reflected in these aircraft being delivered to RAF Lossiemouth between 2019 and 2021.

RELATIVE PERFORMANCE

The Nimrod MR 2 had an operational flight time of about 8½ hours in temperate climates, giving it a ferry range of some 3,600 nm, or allowing it to remain on its operational station for about 3½ hours at 1,000 nm from its operating base. It was capable of being refuelled in the air.

The Nimrod MRA4 had flown over 1,000 hours on trials before being scrapped. Those trials had confirmed that an un-refuelled MRA4 was capable of flying for well over 15 hours, giving it a ferry range of over 6,000 nm, or enabling it to remain on station for 10 hours at 1,000 nm from base. With its air-to-air refuelling system, flight time could have been extended to 27 hours (the limiting factor being engine lubrication), increasing the maximum ferry range to over 10,000 nm.

In terms of sensors and weapons, the operational capabilities of the P-8 and the Nimrod MRA4 are similar. Because of technical advances (especially in computers) the ASW capability of both aircraft is significantly greater than that of the Nimrod MR2. However, by

comparison with the Nimrod MRA4, the maximum flight time of the P-8 is only about 10 hours, giving it a ferry range of no more than 4,500 nm, or allowing it to remain on station for slightly less than five hours at 1,000 nm from base. Although the P-8 is fitted with an air-to-air refuelling system, this is incompatible with the probe-and-drogue system used in the UK's A330 Voyager tankers!

MPA TASKS

The nine primary tasks for which MPA are required are:

- Protection of the UK's strategic deterrent.
- Protection of naval forces - in particular, the new aircraft carriers.
- Protection against threats to commercial and other shipping, including counter-piracy.
- Surveillance of threats to trans-continental under-sea communications cables.
- Operations in areas such as the Caribbean in support of counter-drug operations.
- Protection of oil rigs and shore facilities against potential threats, including assistance in counter-terrorism operations.
- Protection of overseas territories, including the Falklands.
- The gathering of acoustic, electronic and photographic intelligence.
- Search and rescue in aid of shipping and aircraft in distress.

In tension and hostilities, the two highest priority tasks are likely to be protection



of the UK's national strategic deterrent and the protection of naval forces - in particular, the new aircraft carriers.

At least one MPA patrol will need to be continuously available in times of tension and hostilities for protection of the strategic deterrent.

SDSR10 reduced the number of frigates to only 13. Although the current Type 23 frigates will eventually be replaced by fully anti-submarine capable Type 26 Global Combat Ships, only eight are now planned for the Fleet, the balance being made up of Type 31e frigates which will have only a limited anti-submarine capability. Even allowing for embarked helicopters, the defence in depth against long-range missile-firing submarines likely to be available to a UK aircraft carrier (CVA) group without MPA will be inadequate.

The absence of adequate numbers of surface and submarine escorts thus makes the need for adequate MPA support that much more vital. To provide adequate defence in depth, continuous cover by at least two MPA per CVA will be required.

However, additional important tasks, such as surface and sub-surface surveillance elsewhere and protection of the supply train, are also likely to be required in tension and hostilities. It is suggested that a minimum of at least one additional MPA patrol would therefore be required for such operations.

Thus, when the need to protect the UK's strategic deterrent is included, the irreducible number of patrols by UK MPA needing to be on station concurrently, even if only one CVA is deployed at a time, would be four.

MPA FORCE CAPABILITY

The number of continuous patrols an MPA force is able to maintain concurrently depends on the distance from its operating bases at which operations are taking place. The following table shows the operational coverage which was possible with the original Nimrod MR2 force of 21 aircraft and compares this with that possible with 9 P-8 Poseidon MPA and 9 Nimrod MRA4s. The table also shows what a 12 or 15-aircraft P-8 force could achieve.

Clearly, not all patrols would necessarily be taking place at the same distance from base. However, it can be seen from this illustrative table that, to achieve four continuous patrols at anything greater

Table 1 – Comparison of the Sustained Patrol Performances of the Nimrod MR2, MRA4 and P-8A

1. The figures in this table are taken from the detailed study, *The Sustained Patrol Potential of a Royal Air Force Fleet of Nine P8A Poseidon for Maritime Patrol*, recently undertaken by Group Captain Derek Empson, an officer with many years of experience in planning and controlling MPA operations.

2. The Nimrod MR2 figures assume only 70% aircraft availability (as was experienced in the latter days of that aircraft). Those for the more modern Nimrod MR4 and P-8 aircraft assume 85% availability.

3. The minimum number of hours on patrol for effective ASW cover is about three hours. Asterisks are shown against the number of patrols possible at ranges where less than 3 hours on patrol would be achieved.

than 600 nm from base (as would have been possible with nine Nimrod MRA4s), an additional three P-8s would be needed – hence the inclusion of the fifth column in Table 1. As shown in the sixth column, a further three P-8s (ie, a total force of 15) would be required in order to achieve the equivalent Nimrod MR4's coverage out to 1,400 nm. Only the previously planned nine Nimrod MRA4s could have provided effective cover at 2,000 nm from base.

OVERLAND SURVEILLANCE

MOD may conclude that, once the Sentinel is withdrawn from service, it would be possible for the overland surveillance role to be covered by unmanned platforms. However, it might be judged more cost-effective to use the P-8 as a multi-mission aircraft (MMA), rather than as a pure MPA. This could increase operational flexibility in both roles. However, if this option were to be pursued, at least three additional P-8s would be required if assumption of the overland role is not seriously to prejudice maritime operations.

AAR SUPPORT

Should maritime operations take place in distant waters (say, in the South Atlantic or Far East), air-to-air refuelling (AAR) is

likely to be required to extend MPA range and endurance – as was the case with the Falklands War, for which an AAR capability was added to the Nimrod.

The UK's P-8s will be delivered with the standard AAR system fitted, as used by the United States Navy's P-8s but capable of receiving fuel only from tankers fitted with the US flying boom system. Converting the P-8 to a probe-and-drogue system, as used by both RAF and USN fast-jets, would involve significant expense. In addition, because of lower fuel transfer rates, AAR using this system could be a significant tactical disadvantage during anti-submarine operations.

Unlike those of the French, Spanish and Australian A-330 tankers, the UK's A-330 Voyager tankers are fitted only with drogues and will thus not be capable of refuelling RAF P-8s. Like the P-8, both the RAF's C-17 and Rivet Joint aircraft already have receptacles for AAR booms and, were the UK to purchase F35A's once our CVA requirements have been met with the F35B (involving 48 out of a planned 138 buy), so would these aircraft.

AAR can be a useful force-multiplier for operations at long range. As was shown in the late 1980s and early 90s, the AAR

Poseidon MPA



capability added to the Nimrod for the Falklands War also proved to be extraordinarily useful in peacetime (e.g. for intelligence-collecting in the Barents Sea), and was used extensively in Afghanistan. Conversion of the UK's P-8s to a probe-and-drogue system would probably not be worth the consequent considerable expense and disruption of the contract with Boeing. However, adding a boom to the UK's Voyagers might be a very cost-effective alternative.

BOEING P-8 PRODUCTION

From the foregoing it is clear that at least three additional P-8 aircraft need to be procured to provide the minimum level of maritime coverage likely to be required of the UK's MPA force in times of tension and hostilities. If the P-8 force's roles were to be expanded to

include overland surveillance a further three or more aircraft would be required, bringing the total force to at least 15 aircraft. The expanded force would better provide for contingencies such as losses through enemy action or accidents - for which there is currently no provision. However, it should be borne in mind that Boeing's P-8 production line will close at the end of 2022 (for conversion to production of the latest version of the civil Boeing 737) so that orders for any additional P-8s would need to be placed by the end of Q2, 2019.

CONCLUSION

Of course, additional P-8s and AAR capabilities would have to take their place alongside the other candidates for defence funding at a time of extreme financial pressures. However, the



Nimrod MRA 4

potential inability of our planned force of only nine P-8s to provide concurrent continuous cover to both the UK deterrent and other vital tasks, including CVA protection, represents a significant shortfall in our defence capabilities and should be an important consideration in any future adjustment of the Defence Programme.

First MK54 weapons test



Company visit to RAF Benson 20th November 2017

By the Honorary Editor

This was very much an end of season visit, and the seasons let us know so. When your writer rose at pre-sparrows, the rain was lashing down. That and the TAFs ensured that a drive was the only option. Of the six Company members scheduled to fly in to the Oxfordshire base, only one made it, and that in a helicopter – appropriately enough for this centre of the Support Helicopter Force (SHF).

So, some four hours later, having pondered the relative danger of driving round a clogged and rain soaked M25 against the comfort of a light aircraft, I just made it for the appointed 0930 meeting time.

We were well hosted by Sqn Ldr Tim Smith of 33 Sqn; with 8 years of Puma experience, there was no doubting his expertise. He outlined the Force Structure with Benson's Puma assets being held by 33 and 230 Squadrons.

The crews of 33 Sqn work on a rotation of five tasks:

- Pre-Deployment Training
- Op Toral – manning the 3 Pumas at Kabul International Airport in support of UK and NATO personnel
- Leave & currency work
- 'R2' readiness – being on 5 days' notice to deploy
- Exercises

The bread and butter workload of the Pumas is the transport of troops and freight, with a payload of 2 tonnes. Less common is the casevac role (up to 6 stretchers). Tim took us through the airframe's defence aids suites, and its performance envelope. The Puma Force is now solely composed of the HC2 model, introduced in 2013, although it should be said that many of the airframes are converted HC1 models. The main differences are much more powerful engines, and a more capable flight management system. Both made the Puma a more usable asset in the Afghan environment.

The continuing Op Toral role in the country was explained in detail; given the sustained tempo of operations of the SHF in the last 30 years, it is no surprise



Sqn Ldr Smith sets the scene



Flt Lt Sam Hodgkinson demonstrates the inspiration given by his grandfather

that Puma crews are still in the line of danger; although we were surprised by the relatively small radius of their area of operations. The flying tempo for crews in Afghanistan is unsurprisingly much higher than back in the UK, where hours have followed the RAF-wide drift downwards.

Given the pressure on all parts of our Armed Forces to justify their continued existence, we sensed a degree of justifiable pride in the achievement of the Benson team on Op Ruman – the disaster relief operation following the recent Caribbean hurricanes. This must

be a contributory factor to the station winning the Stainforth Trophy (see News in the last edition). The speed with which three aircraft, crews, and many support staff were deployed was astonishing – essentially on task 3 days after the first request – and operating in extremely arduous conditions. The speed of deployment is helped by the fact that the Puma can be rebuilt in only 4 hours after transshipment by C17. This results in rapid global reach carrying the Union Jack, which must surely please the Foreign Office!

The evolution of the training system to



Varying levels of concentration from the Company members viewing a Puma!



This was the best weather of the day....

MFTS, together with enhancements to the Chinook, were outlined. We were then handed over to Flt Lt Sam Hodgkinson of 28 Sqn, the Puma and Chinook OCU. Sam is an extremely experienced rotary pilot, only recently transferred from the RN. He explained how his initial motivation to learn to fly came from stories from his grandfather – a WW2 RAAF Sunderland pilot. The course at the OCU is nominally 27 weeks' duration, with students having previously spend just over a year on rotary training at Shawbury; the OCU operates 5 HC4 Chinooks – the glass cockpit model. Sam noted that it was as well to use aspects of the autopilot at all times, as without it the aircraft has a tendency to fall over itself. The Chinook has of course been even more of a workhorse for the SHF (see visit reports from Odiham in previous editions), with many airframes having 10-12,000 hours! The work rate of the airframes, maintainers, and crews in Op Herrick was outstanding. Sam explained the skillset with which new pilots leave the OCU, and how further expertise is gained on their operational squadron. With the HC4 being an easy aircraft to fly (sadly we had to take Sam's word on that), the chop rate is gratifyingly low.

After lunch in the Sergeants' Mess, we were fortunate to have a thorough briefing from the Station Commander, Wg Cdr Hamish Cormack. After running through Benson's illustrious heritage (notably its being the home of PR Spitfires in WW2), and underlining his key objectives, Wg Cdr Cormack ably fielded a barrage of questions. It is clear that the MoD's lack of funds weighs

heavily on much decision-making, and there is currently no identified replacement for the Puma and Chinook, or at least none publicly identified. Both stalwarts however have potential for further upgrades. He is notably comfortable with the very Joint nature of the SHF and Joint Helicopter Command (and indeed having an ultimate boss wearing khaki). We were very grateful to Wg Cdr Cormack for giving up so much time, and for his frank responses. Graham Powell presented him with a cheque for the station's charitable funds as a token of our gratitude.

Our final port of call was the sim centre, more properly known as the Tactical Control Centre. Operated by Serco and CAE, it services also the Chinook force from Odiham; there was plenty of evidence of foreign crews soaking up the

unit's spare capacity. Although we noted the resource mix seemed biased in favour of the Chinook – the single Puma simulator is fully utilised. The six sims have varying levels of visuals, and can be interlinked. The instructors are unsurprisingly all ex-military QHIs, and we were left in no doubt of the utility of the training given. Indeed one very grateful Dutch pilot had recently confirmed in writing that the emergency drills he learned in the sweatboxes at Benson had saved his life.

A final wrap-up from Sqn Ldr Tim Smith completed a fascinating day for lucky Company members.

The impressive sim facility

