

Historic Aircraft Association

Newsletter



March 2017

HAA looks to the future



New Look HAA



Chairman Wally Epton contemplates the way ahead

The Strategic Review is under way and the Task Force comprising Cliff Spink, Dodge Bailey, Phil Hall, Phil O'Dell, Edwin Brenninkmeyer and Malcolm Ward have met twice and been hotly conferring in between. Since suggesting that the time had come for the HAA to take a really good look at itself, and decide in which direction we should be going, I am delighted that the SRTF are sharing the same enthusiasm to re-shape this Association. I am hopeful that we can make the HAA

more meaningful and effective for the owners of historic aircraft, who put so much passion and money into their hobby.

We have participated in the newly formed All Party Parliamentary Group for General Aviation led by MP's Byron Davis and Grant Shapps and strongly supported by a number of other MP's including that aviation stalwart Sir Gerald Howarth. The launch meeting focussed on fighting for airfield survival and the need to get youth involved in aviation. From my contact with Grant Shapps and the close liaison that Steve Crocker has with his MP, Byron Davis we know how energetic these two MP's are about achieving change to the way things are being done in General Aviation. We have briefed them on the advantages of delegating responsibility for safety and oversight to the historic aircraft community under SAM and they have embraced the system with enthusiasm.

Grant Shapps and Byron Davis appraised the Secretary of State for Transport Chris Grayling of what we were trying to achieve with the CAA. The Secretary of State has agreed to appoint a Commons Minister responsible for GA, and meanwhile we have met with the Transport Minister for Aviation Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon and briefed him on the work of the HAA and its aspirations for SAM. The outcome of the meeting was that Lord Ahmed directed the CAA to recommence work on SAM after the publication of the AAIB report on Shoreham. Originally the CAA GAU wanted to maintain an embargo on developing SAM with us until after the Coroner's Enquiry into the accident had been closed.

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New look HAA (cont)

As this might take years, Lord Ahmed asked the CAA and HAA not to wait but to get on with SAM as soon as possible.

Not everybody in the historic aircraft community can see the full advantages that SAM would bring, but you only have to look at the Australian Warbirds Limited website at: <http://australianwarbirds.com.au> and you will see how thriving the historic aircraft community is Down Under since moving over to SAM 10 years ago.

There is no longer a large GA department in the Australian CASA and the responsibility for airworthiness and operational approvals is now all dealt with by AWAL. Safety has improved because now those in the historic aircraft community are responsible for safety and oversight. It really does work, so those who argue that it could not work here, or they don't want it to work here are living in the 'old world' of the 'nanny state' where government and the CAA does everything.

The big worry here in the UK is that our historic aircraft numbers are dwindling and none more so than historic jet aircraft. This is not an encouraging situation, and it is one which would not be happening if experts in this historic aircraft community were made responsible for safety and oversight together with responsibility for issuing approvals under SAM. It is not complicated and it is not difficult to do, as you will see on the AWAL website.

On the airshow scene the future looks very depressing. We share with BADA their concern over the risk-averse regulations that have been imposed on air displays and air shows. The results already indicate air shows being cancelled and a dwindling industry. We need to establish a risk-based safety management system that will re-enable airshows to flourish again safely.

The HAA Annual Meeting is almost upon us and if the SRTF have completed their review by the 19th March we may be in a position to see a new way forward. I make no apologies for banging on about SAM because I see that being the solution to an historic aircraft association's future. Without a solid *raison d'être* an association is ineffective. The historic aircraft community will only survive if the owners who put their passion and their money into keeping this heritage alive and flying, are convinced that belonging to, and supporting a strong and meaningful association is where they should be.

WJE



Invitation for HAA members to attend the AGM, Old Warden 19th March



2017 will be a very important meeting with regards to the direction and future aspirations of the HAA, and how we will engage with, and work for, our members.

The day includes a presentation by the Air Accident Investigation Branch, and once again Barry Tempest will conduct an international air display safety review.

AGM (continued)

Bring along your HAA membership card and feel free to explore the whole of the Shuttleworth Collection at no charge. Lunch can be purchased in the museum canteen. The AGM proceedings begin at 10.00.

All members are requested to indicate their intentions regarding attendance at the Annual Meeting to aid administration and to assist the caterers. Please contact the Membership Secretary at:

Wendy Hinchcliffe 56 Corby Road, Weldon, Corby, Northants NN17 3HT
Or e-mail: w.hinchcliffe@googlemail.com

WARBIRD MELT-DOWN?

Steve Slater contemplates a challenging year ahead

I hate to start the display season on a negative note, but I write with a genuine fear for the future of the British historic aircraft industry. The combination of soaring CAA fees to airshow organisers and aircraft operators, as well as an increasingly risk-averse attitude within the regulator after the Shoreham airshow accident is making it ever-more difficult for historic aircraft operators to make ends meet.

Operating a 'warbird' has never been less than financially onerous. Disregarding the costs of maintenance and purchase, even flown economically a Merlin-engined fighter will sup high octane aviation fuel at a cost of around £1,500 per hour, while a humble Jet Provost, once rather cruelly described as having "constant thrust, but variable noise" will still swallow up to 600 litres an hour of Jet-A1 at around 80 pence a litre, just in the cruise. You can double that if you turn up the volume.



That of course is if you are allowed to fly the aircraft at all. If you own a Hawker Hunter; where once I would envy you, now I sympathise. There hasn't been civilian-registered Hunter in the skies above Britain since that fateful day at Shoreham in August 2015. The immediate blanket grounding of the fleet has never been rescinded, largely one suspects for political reasons. While even the AAIB's forensic analysis of the aircraft type since the accident has thrown up little more than some technicalities which had little or no bearing on the tragedy it seems, there is no will in the CAA to let them fly again.

Aircraft hate not to fly and even the best storage regimes and decontamination runs can't prevent a steady deterioration in condition. That then starts to put even more pressure on the owners. Aircraft still cost money even when they are standing still and it's therefore not too surprising to see aircraft recently entering the market place, at what appear to be bargain basement prices. How about an airworthy Jet Provost T3 for just £12,500? That's not even the price of a used Ford Mondeo!

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The causes are clear, and again point to the CAA's door. The common point among aircraft owners is that the increase in display authorisation fees have made many air shows unviable or reduced the number of aircraft being displayed. This has drastically reduced owners' income from airshows, private events and operations, with a knock-on effect down the line in maintenance and engineering. Organisations have had to reduce their staff and let go volunteers who keep these aircraft airworthy.

Historic and Classic Aircraft Sales are currently marketing some 30 warbird and classic aircraft for sale and there is still apparently a buoyant market overseas, boosted by the relative low exchange value of sterling. That's still bad news for British airshow fans however. It may be that ever more aircraft will head abroad where they *are* allowed to fly and earn their keep.

Thankfully, one organisation has elected to do something about the breaking the risk-averse attitudes. The Historic Aircraft Association has invited five of the most influential individuals from the historic aircraft world to conduct an independent review, and propose a future strategy for the Association to better support the flying community. Here's hoping they can offer hope to a beleaguered industry. SS

New HAA website goes live!

As is the way with most IT projects, the transition has been more prolonged and complicated than first expected! However our new website has been ably steered by Richie Piper and is a key component of the HAA's web presence. Whilst there is still more to complete, it puts us in a good position to directly control the content ourselves more easily, whilst incorporating better multi-platform support and improved media capabilities. That means users will be able to access the HAA website on a variety of devices (PC, tablets, smartphones, etc) with content optimised for each. We will also be able to add more features such as ticket sales and membership renewals online in due course. Just Google **HAA** to take a look (and ignore the Hampshire Archery Association!).



With great sadness we learnt that loyal HAA member and supporter **John Watkins** died recently. *Bob Grimstead* remembers him as "one of the nicest men you could ever meet. Dignified, refined, knowledgeable and extremely polite, but quietly self-effacing, and yet with a sparkle in his eyes and a delightfully boyish sense of humour."

John was an apprentice and draughtsman with de Havilland back in the days of Comets and Vampires, and his hero was John Cunningham. He went on to work for an aviation consultancy company before moving to the CAA for perhaps twenty years until retirement. He started learning to fly on Tiger Moths at Hatfield, but a growing family meant he had to put that aside for a couple of decades before completing his training on Rallyes at Biggin Hill in the seventies. As a long-time Tiger Club member he was often seen campaigning a Stampe, or flying his own cherished Turbulent.