

# Historic Aircraft Association



## HAA - *Forty Years* **Anniversary Issue**

# The HAA Management Committee

**HAA President** Sir Gerald Howarth

## HAA Management Committee

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## Colin Dodds

HAA Honourary Vice-President

As we go to press, it is with great sadness that we learn of the death of HAA stalwart, Colin Dodds, who endured poor health for a number of years, but loyally served the organisation, for as long as he was able.

During this summer, Colin's fellow syndicate members took him for a trip in his beloved Tiger Moth, which was just one of the many types upon which he had instructed or displayed. A fuller account of his distinguished flying career will be featured on the HAA website in the coming days.

## The aims of the Historic Aircraft Association

1. Promotion of the restoration, preservation and operation of historic aircraft.
2. The promotion of safe flying of historic aircraft.
3. To promote and protect the Association members.
4. To work closely and in accord with all other fully constituted organisations in the UK, Europe and World Wide to advise on the establishment of aviation and other regulations in keeping with the historic nature of all types of historic aircraft and aviation artefacts.
5. To provide authoritative information to: owners, display organisers, those responsible for regulating historic aircraft
6. Provide a forum for discussing matters concerning the continued operation of historic aircraft.
7. To establish and maintain an authoritative electronic information system for the membership and for the historic aviation community.



*A longed-for sight in 2020, a vintage aircraft displaying at a public event. By July the Shuttleworth Collection had worked out a way to accommodate visitors within the restrictions of Covid guidelines. Full report in this issue.*

## From the Editor

Welcome to our special celebratory issue of the HAA Journal, upgraded from our more usual Newsletter format, to mark forty years of the association. During these four decades we have worked to promote the safe operation of historic aircraft, encouraging and supporting the operators and lobbying on their behalf to overcome the regulatory restrictions, and associated costs which have often placed a heavy burden on operating budgets.

The Display Authorisation scheme which the HAA instigated, has for many years been at the core of safe airshow flying, applying guidance and mentoring, to maintain the highest possible standards.

Within the HAA membership we are fortunate to have an impressive fund of experience and knowledge, and in my editorial role I have been greatly assisted by our members, and some associates ( future members ! ) to bring together a selection of articles and reports to present an overview of UK historic flying . Funding remains a key challenge, as outlined by Jock Alexander, Chief Executive of Navy Wings.

Display flying has been hugely interrupted this year, and it is most encouraging to see energetic and creative organisations finding a way to keep it all going, as related by Howard Cook in his article.

Through his association with Cambridge Flying Group, he also brings us the an inspiring account of a young pilot who has just completed her PPL training, all on a Tiger Moth!

Without question, the HAA has an important role to play supporting the ongoing operation of historic aircraft in the UK, and after a period of re-organisation we are now getting on a firm footing, to make a difference. We are also very committed to offer more benefits to our members, mindful especially that 2020 has unfortunately been a barren year, in terms of what we have been able to deliver, and we really do thank all our members for their loyalty.

Our newly appointed HAA social events co-ordinator has an impressive number of 'behind-the-scenes' opportunities to roll out, as soon as circumstances permit.

2020 has not been the year we were expecting, but looking ahead, both within our organisation, and the wider arena of the UK historic flying scene, there is much to look forward to. Before too long, we may well see another flying DH-88 Comet, a Tempest 11, a Mosquito (or two !), a Fiat CR42, Percival Q6, a Walrus and quite a few more.

Public enthusiasm for old aeroplanes is enormous, the 'industry' is widespread and keeping busy, present difficulties should eventually start to ease - there is plenty of scope for optimism !

**Andrew Smith**

# 'The World's First Drive-In Airshow'

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at the Shuttleworth Collection

## Howard Cook reports

After months of airshow cancellations there was light at the end of the tunnel with the staging of what was billed as "the world's first socially-distanced Drive-In airshow" on 18<sup>th</sup> July.

Many I had spoken to in the airshow-visiting fraternity had said that they were keen to support the Shuttleworth Collection after months of the COVID 19 inflicted shutdown and what must have been the eradication of most of their revenue generating means to keep the Collection thriving.

Thus it transpired as the first drive in show was sellout. As a former Air Display Director myself I was particularly interested to see how the COVID restrictions could be worked with to create the first airshow of the season.

Booking for the show was online only and entry was by these advance tickets only. Entry to the show was by the Shuttleworth College gate and visitors were formed into lines in their cars. It took an hour after opening for my car to be let through but the lines were all well spaced out and lots of conversations were taking place in the vehicle lines and much of what I heard was from those that were "*just relieved to be back at a show again*" although I did also speak to

some that were visiting Old Warden for the first time and explained they "*just wanted to get out to an event at last*" after months of not being able to do so.

The event had been well-marketed such that visitors knew that they could drive in and be parked in a white line marked space or 'Zone'. Each of these zones had their own 'dedicated Welfare Hub' which included a block of toilets, sanitising station and a refreshment outlet selling hot drinks and snacks. Each of these zones were well-stewarded by Shuttleworth volunteers.

In the very clear instructions issued with the bookings everyone had been requested to remain in the area around their own vehicle to enjoy the airshow. It was also possible as you came in to be able to meet up with other family or friends so that you could park together.

I had other family members visiting the show and the Shuttleworth entry staff were very helpful in enabling this to take place without holding up the show entry for others. It had also been asked that no stepladders, raised tailgates, gazebos or sitting on the roof of vehicles was permitted so that the view of the show for others was not ruined.





To keep the crowd informed all had been advised to tune in their radios to 87.8 'Shuttleworth FM Radio' where they could hear HAA's Steve Slater commentating. PA announcements were kept to a minimum so that the system was clear if it was needed for an emergency. A number said that the lack of PA meant that they could hear the engines of the display aircraft more clearly, and this was welcomed.

At 5.30 pm the flying programme commenced with an excellent display by John Romain in the now well-known "Thank U NHS" Mk.XI Spitfire, before the well-interlinked programme of Shuttleworth Collection aircraft flowed seamlessly after it. The weather was grey but warm to start with and despite dark skies being in the distance this held off and the sky cleared, to become a glorious blue, which lasted well on into the evening.

This report seeks not to dwell too much about the flying, but rather to look at the COVID effects on putting on an airshow, though as usual there was much excellent airmanship of all types taking place all evening. Once the display commenced the crowd maintained their social distancing throughout and with my years of event management experience I looked at the best ways to assess an event in the public's eyes.

The content was very much appreciated and display items were getting standing ovations when they turned off the runway from where

I was watching, which was in field at the southside of the college. There were no queues for the toilets and there were enough of them, they were clean and marked with social spacing lines. Also prevalent were the inevitable sanitiser stations, and there were no long queues for food.

The display ended with the Sea Hurricane and Spitfire AR501 at around 8.30 pm. Turbulent air at 200ft had been advised to all of the crowd by the FM radio and thus the Edwardian aircraft would not be able to fly. The exit of the 900 vehicles from the show was very well organized and the field very quickly cleared, since all seemed to be taking their own rubbish with them, as requested.

There is no doubt from what we saw at the show that there had been a colossal effort by the Shuttleworth Collection in coping with the additional COVID 19 limitations over and above their more normal airshow operation.

From everyone I have spoken to it was a huge success and interestingly a number have said that they prefer the airshow format of the Drive In show to the normal event. *"We had everything with us instead of having to carry it around and it was a great event"* said 25 year old Tiger Moth pilot Ross Parady.

After years of displaying, organising or working at air displays, I would give the 'World's First Drive In Airshow' 10/10. I hope it has been a successful one for Shuttleworth.



# *Life with a Yak 12*

*STOL Flying, Soviet style*

*Roger Bade*

It was after an interesting visit to Nayland in my Yak 18T that I decided that I needed improved kit to cope with all those short strips, farm strips and microlight bases that I wanted to visit. I also wanted to convert to tailwheel, so what better than a side by side dual control radial STOL high wing four seat Yak 12M ?

The Yak 12 was designed by the Russian Yakovlev Design bureau to meet a requirement of the Soviet Air Force in 1944 for a new liaison and utility plane, to replace the obsolete Po-2 biplane.

After a few problems, the new Yak 12 first flew in 1947, with 788 of the basic variant produced in Russia including military observation planes, some air ambulances, agricultural aircraft and floatplanes. It was a plane of a mixed, but conventional construction and could take 1 or 2 passengers, apart from the pilot.

The next generation Yak 12 entered production in 1952, starting with the Yak-12R, fitted with a new 260 hp Ivchenko AI-14R radial and all-metal construction with fabric covering. The wing area increased around 10% to 23.8 square metres giving a take-off run of 50 metres (m) and a landing roll of 80 m.

This variant became more universal, offering a bigger payload. It took a pilot and 3 passengers and could be fitted with dual controls for

training, a stretcher for an ambulance role, or agricultural spraying devices. It became the most numerous variant.

After being lengthened to improve weight distribution, with further strengthening of the structure and other minor changes, from 1955 the Yak 12M ("modified or modernised") was produced. A visible difference was a lengthened, curved tailfin. This variant became more universal, offering a bigger payload. It took a pilot and 3 passengers and could be fitted with dual controls for training, a stretcher for an ambulance role, or agricultural spraying devices.

It became the most numerous variant. The last generation, produced from 1957, was the **Yak 12A** and this was an aerodynamically refined variant, with a slimmer fuselage and a new wing. The rectangular wings were fitted with trapezoidal ends and automatic slats, also single struts replaced twin struts. Whereas a Yak 12M will cruise at 140 kilometres per hour (kph) (about 75 knots), a similar power setting will propel the less draggy Yak 12A up to 170 kph (about 90 knots).

In the USSR, 3,801 Yak-12s were built in all models and a **Yak12 B** biplane was also developed, but did not enter production.

So once the pilot has converted, what can it do? The aircraft has presence, even the curved joystick, with integral brake lever, is much larger than any other I have seen; the aircraft is very manoeuvrable, can utilise very short airstrips; but is rather slow and quite thirsty.

The fixed slats help generate shed loads of lift but are rather draggy. Although it was built around 60 years ago, so far the spares and maintenance situation has been good, with many of the parts being interchangeable with the PZL Wilga, Nanchang CJ6 and other Russian Yaks.

The engine is the AI-14RA predecessor of the M-14P's fitted to the later Yaks, so is lower powered (260 horsepower (hp) versus 360 hp) and doesn't have the automatic mixture control that the M14P has, hence the 60 litres of fuel consumed per hour at 140 kph (just over 75 knots) is somewhat poor in comparison to the 50-55 litres per hour for up to 220 kph (nearly 120 knots) achieved by a Yak 18T.



One advantage is a longer overhaul engine life of 800 hours as compared to 500 for the M14P engines (or 1,000 hours first run for an AI-14RA versus 750 hours first run for a M14P, if you can find new engines that is).

A similar compressed air system with bottle and engine driven compressor, provides air start and powers the brakes and flaps. Fuel capacity is 180 litres, while the 15 litre oil tank gives a decent buffer over the 8 litre minimum.

With the high wing, the view from up there is fantastic and one can even open the windows for more ventilation, or for the passenger to take photographs.

Strips down to 300m in length can be contemplated with ease, with taking off distance being generally shorter than landing. It is also easier to take off in a cross wind than it is land, as the 8 knots crosswind landing limit is a little mean. Taxiing on the ground can also be challenging in strong winds, with large surfaces and moment arms to interrupt smooth progress.

In addition, to help, the fully castoring tailwheel can be partially locked with the stick fully aft. With its large almost tundra tyres, uneven, soft or even flooded ground is a cinch, but what can be tricky at times are adverse cambers or wet chalk clay airstrips where the aircraft can slide on top of the surface.

It is also with practice well behaved on tarmac and whereas with the nose wheel Yak 18T one has to be careful with uneven ground and stones as the rotating propeller was close to the ground, the tailwheel Yak 12M offers greater ground clearance.

Both are genuine four seaters, with the Yak 12M being only more sprightly if only the pilot is carried; there being little noticeable difference if the aircraft is two up or four up. The rear seats can however be quite uncomfortable for passengers if taxiing on rough surfaces, but once in the air equilibrium is regained.

Maximum All Up Weight (MAUW) is 1,450 kilograms (kg), with a 424 kg payload. In comparison, the later PZL 101 Gawron, with its further aft centre of gravity, is a real load carrier with a MAUW of 1,650 kg and a payload of 646 kg.

In Poland, apparently the Yak 12M will carry three parachutists, while the Gawron can carry four plus the pilot. In comparison, the Yak 18T also has a MAUW of 1,650 kg, but only can carry a payload of 433 kg.



There are two yellow Yak 12M's in the country; SP-AAB (Construction Number 112 602) was the second aircraft built in Poland and was delivered on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1956 and my aircraft G-PFKD (210 999), which was the sixth from last built in Poland and was delivered on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1960.

My aircraft was imported into the country from Poland as long ago as 1998 and was operated for a number of years from the West Country with a Lithuanian registration. The aircraft was grounded post the CAA restrictions on Russian and Lithuanian registered aircraft in 2001 and while the Yak 18T's could transition to Hungary, the Yak 12M was orphaned, as then, a four seat former military aircraft couldn't be allotted a CAA Permit-to-Fly.

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The aircraft languished for a few years, until I discovered that it could be registered in Hungary under the Normal Category. Hence, I bought it in 2005 and had it ferried out to Hungary where it undertook an overhaul.

I was able to operate it in this fashion for a number of years, but eventually in 2011 Hungary fully entered EASA and thus couldn't issue a Permit-to-Fly for an aircraft based outside of the country





I immediately applied for a UK Permit-to-Fly, as the rules had changed in the meantime and moved the aircraft onto the UK register with a CAA Permit-to-Fly.

It appears that most aircraft were built as single seaters and this seems to be a reason why more aren't active in our skies, the aggravation of checking out in a large single seat taildragger being rather off-putting.

I have one of the few dual control Yak 12M trainers in the world; most Gawrons have dual controls, while I have yet to see a dual controlled Yak 12A

One would want to be thoroughly checked out in a Yak 12M first before contemplating the Yak 12A, as one would imagine that the single control column might be a bit of a handful, particularly with an aircraft with automatic slats, rather the fixed ones found on the Yak 12M.

As I currently fly in the aircraft as a passenger these days, my first priority is to regain my medical and flying licence, but eventually it would be nice to fly in both the Yak 12A and the Gawron as comparisons.

We were pleased to have recently ticked off both Bourne Park and Aylesbury/Thame before they permanently closed, but there are still numerous airstrips and microlight fields we have yet to visit, interesting little places, where the sturdy Yak really has a chance to show what it can do. **RB**

Photos Andrew Smith

## HAA Symposium 2020 cancelled

With a certain inevitability, but great disappointment nevertheless, the HAA Symposium Working Group had to concede that our much-cherished annual event could not go ahead this year. The ongoing uncertainty on available places at the RAF Museum, distancing issues within the venue, problems with catering arrangements, and the possibility of last-minute changes to government guidelines, combined to make the event unviable in the form that we have all enjoyed it.

As you would expect, the line-up of speakers was shaping up to be another great event, but we are delighted that our guest presenters are still hoping to appear for us at our next Symposium.

See you in 2021 !

Tim Scorer, Allan Vogel, Andrew Smith

## [Book Review - Rate of Climb](#)

**Air Commodore Rick Peacock-Edwards**  
CBE AFC

**It is something** of a cliché to say that I could not put this book down. But it is true: my copy arrived in the morning post and, as I had many things to do that day, I resolved to take just a quick peek. That evening, I had finished the book and failed to start my list of jobs for the day. However, it was well worth it. Rick Peacock-Edwards, fighter pilot, and Air Commodore, has produced a gripping book, that reflects a fascinating life.

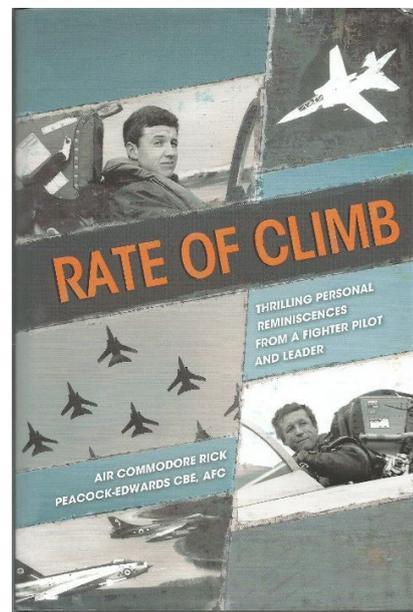
The son of a Battle of Britain pilot, Rick was born in Kent, but spent much of his childhood in Africa. In an introductory chapter to the book, Rick recounts his father's wartime exploits and explains that his father and fellow Battle of Britain pilots were his heroes and had a profound influence on Rick's own way of life.

In a long RAF career, Rick amassed a wealth of experience on the front line fighter aircraft of the day, Lightning, Phantom and Tornado, plus lead-in training on the Hunter and a tour of duty as a Gnat instructor. He is therefore exceptionally well qualified to write about these iconic and now historic aircraft.

Rick mentions in passing that he came top of his advanced flying training course on the Gnat and, again, graduated from the Lightning OCU as first in the overall order of merit. In those days of unremittingly high standards and high "chop" rates, Rick was clearly made of the "right stuff."

This is no polished "ghost written" memoir: Rick recounts how he engaged a professional writer to help him put it together and then, dismayed by the results, sacked the writer and did it himself. It may have taken longer, but undoubtedly made the book much better and more authentic.

Those who know Rick will hear his voice in their heads as they turn the pages. One of the themes running through the book is Rick's sense of fairness: he listened patiently as two of his junior officers confessed to setting fire to a tree that had, the day before, been planted in great ceremony by a royal visitor. Rick admits to seeing the funny side of this escapade and his punishment of the miscreants was both fitting and short-lived.



Another theme is that of flight safety and the belated introduction of a "just culture", where those who admit to making mistakes are listened to and the lessons learned for the benefit of others, instead of being blamed for their human failings.

Rick's appointment as the Inspector of Flight Safety was an inspired choice and he did much to get rid of the previous blame culture, which deterred rather than encouraged honest and open reporting. As a Cold War warrior, in the days of relatively high accident rates, it is fitting that Rick has dedicated the book to those of his flying colleagues who were killed in flying accidents. The list of their names runs to two pages. Moreover, these are just his close friends: there are many other acquaintances mentioned in the text who paid the ultimate price.

With his strong advocacy for flight safety and his vast experience in aircraft that are now part of our history, it is no surprise that Rick became President of the HAA. He served us well in our mission of ensuring that historic aircraft continue to be flown, but flown safely.

However, the HAA was just one of many strings to his bow after he left the RAF. The foreword is by HAA Vice-President, Air Vice Marshal Cliff Spink, who succinctly states that Rick followed the classic fighter pilot path in his career: always striving for excellence in the cockpit and never far from trouble when out. This is a cracking tale, well told. Highly recommended.

**Reviewed by Malcolm Ward**  
*Published by Grub Street*

# NAVY WINGS



**Jock Alexander OBE FRAEs, Chief Executive of Navy Wings outlines the issues facing this operator of historic aircraft, as they embark on a new self-funding era.**

The Fly Navy Heritage Trust (now operating under the name Navy Wings) has been in existence in one form or another since 1993, but a recent sequence of events has forced the Charity to become an independent operator of aircraft and significantly up its fundraising game.

The Chief Executive, Jock Alexander OBE FRAEs (himself an ex Fleet Air Arm pilot), was appointed in 2016 to take this forward and Navy Wings was launched in July 2017 by Frederick Forsyth CBE.

The CE explains the challenges involved in running a small, heritage charity, particularly during the Covid 19 crisis and what the future might hold.

**THE MISSION** - The Charity aims to catalyse remembrance and inspire future generations by bringing together the aircraft, people and story of flying from ships, and we do this primarily by flying our heritage naval aircraft around the UK. Indeed, the charity's work supports very 'UK Ltd' themes.

Not only does the flying of the aircraft serve to stimulate remembrance for those FAA personnel who served, it also showcases and educates on the evolution and technical excellence of the UK aviation industry and the British innovations that have enabled the operation of high-performance aircraft from ships at sea.

We like to prompt the thought – 'If our forebears could be so innovative and successful in solving significant technical and operating challenges, then surely current and future generations can be too?'

Traditionally this was done by the military through the Royal Navy Historic Flight (RNHF), as the senior Service recognised that whilst you cannot take a warship into middle England, you can certainly use naval aircraft to spread the message. Increasing pressure on the defence budget however, coupled with regulatory challenges arising from operating a mix of modern and historic aircraft, have now forced the RN to cease Historic Flight operations.

Therefore, at the end of this year, Navy Wings will accept ownership of the RN's Historic Flight aircraft comprising two iconic WW2 Swordfish, a Korean War era Sea Fury, a Seahawk early jet and a Chipmunk training aircraft.

### **The Challenge**

There are several areas where a small charity, operating in the heritage area, finds it difficult to function, the key ones being regulatory, taxation, fund raising and risk management, particularly with some of the large Corporate Defence companies. Increasing regulation in the aviation field, particularly (and rightly) following the Shoreham crash in 2015, continues to be a challenge, but this is compounded by making commercial companies extremely risk averse, when being asked to support vintage aviation.

This is not insurmountable, but it does take some in-depth dialogue to persuade people to support us with technical support and advice. Almost all the companies who made the aircraft, engines, or other component parts of old aircraft, have been subsumed into large multi-nationals and we need access to original drawings and design diagrams if we are to make replacement parts for these aircraft.

In this litigious world in which we live, we must find some way of protecting the reputational risk of companies who genuinely want to help keeping these priceless aircraft in the air, lest something goes wrong.

Areas where the Government could help are the way small heritage charities are treated for taxation, along with the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) approach to disposal of old equipment. The first is easy, in that classic cars are subject to a lesser VAT rate than new ones, so why not vintage aircraft?

The second would simply take a change in interpretation of policy, to recognise that all heritage activity is a legitimate benefit to the UK taxpayer and not just monetary return. Thankfully a Heritage Working group under the All-Party Parliamentary Group on General Aviation has been set up and is starting to grapple with issues like risk protection, taxation and disposal of assets.



W5856, one of the two Swordfish on strength. The aircraft re-joined the display circuit in 2015, carrying a new paint scheme which depicts Swordfish of 820 Naval Air Squadron during the attack of the Bismarck in 1941.

Fundraising is essentially the same for all Charities, but the only way to raise money in the heritage field is to find some empathy with those who donate and to ensure we deliver a recognisable, professional output with which people like to be associated .

In short, the experience of our Supporters must be positive and fun. To that end, we are continually seeking closer ties with Industry and we have also developed significant and beneficial corporate sponsorship opportunities, which have already attracted several well-known companies.

For us specifically, we need to raise our fundraising game to support the ex-RNHF aircraft and this means almost doubling our annual income from about £650k, to just over £1M within the next five years. This will be a considerable challenge, but we have a plan and were already seeing tangible increases in our income streams, retail sales and a growing Supporter base.

Our risk register didn't quite foresee the Coronavirus impacts, but running a charity is very much akin to running a small business and we have to change and adapt to prevailing circumstances.

We reacted as quickly as possible to the impacts of Covid-19 and whilst we have had no air display or supporter event income (which have historically been significant income sources for us) this year, we have shaped the team using the government support arrangements to most efficiently sustain during the hiatus.

We have focused on significantly enhancing our on-line presence, which is already starting to pay off and we must now secure the future of our Naval aviation heritage by building on these successes.

### **The Future**

The future is bright, if rather more of a challenge in the post-Covid context. Once the Royal Navy aircraft are transferred to Navy Wings we will have the largest collection of operational, historic naval aircraft in this country. Along with our privately owned, but affiliated Associate Collection, we have aircraft ranging from the Royal Naval Air Service in the Great War, though World War II to the post-cold war era. The story of maritime aviation, from Aircraft Carriers and small ships is a (cont) .







*Sea Fury VR930 was formerly owned and operated by the Royal Navy and following the decision to remove historic naval aircraft from the military register was gifted by Parliament in November 2019 to Navy Wings, and is now placed on the civil register as G-CLNJ .*

*Photo Lee Howard*

fundamentally exciting one and the part Britain played in its development is often forgotten. Whether it was shooting down Zeppelins in the Great War, sinking the Bismarck in World War II, or supporting troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, Royal Navy aircrew along with their engineering and ground support teams were always in the front line.

Aerospace and aviation rely heavily on technological innovation and the achievements of naval flying can encourage and inspire the skills of inventiveness and problem solving

so crucially needed in our modern world. This narrative is an important one for the Nation and it is now being delivered by a small charity based at Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton in Somerset, which is punching way above its weight with its mission to tell this exhilarating story.

Finally, we are particularly pleased to be able to utilise membership of the HAA by getting our message out, particularly given the common ground we cover and we believe this is the start of another exciting chapter for Navy Wings. JA

If you can support Navy Wings by a donation, membership or corporate sponsorship, please do so, as they are an inspiring and fantastic flying part of our aviation heritage, and helping to enable is what the HAA is all about.

George Romain

**COVER STORY.** Without question the UK's most high-profile historic aircraft story of 2020 has been the inspirational flights undertaken by Aircraft Restoration Company at Duxford, using their own PR11 Spitfire PL983. The initial concept of the 'hospital tours' soon evolved into a compelling fund-raising project.



ARCo have offered the public a chance to donate to the fund-raising, by nominating a friend or family member, whose name is then written by hand on the aeroplane. With a minimum donation of £10 (many give more ) and room for 80,000 names, it is on course to raise a very significant sum. Details for donating are available on the ARCo facebook page.

The stunning photographs, by George Romain, have been kindly made available to the HAA by ARCo and we are delighted to support and endorse their endeavour.



*'Cleared to Run-In'*

## Confessions of a Display Pilot

Andrew Smith

I look back upon my career as a display pilot with mixed emotions, but probably bemusement is the prime contender. The description 'Display Pilot' is to me novel and striking, a bit like trying on an unsuitably flamboyant hat, momentarily enjoying the effect, and sensibly setting it aside again.

For someone who has attended countless airshows over five decades, the opportunity to get on the glamorous side of the flightline is an opportunity not to be missed. Years ago organisations such as the Tiger Club helped and encouraged PPL members to develop the skills and confidence to perform in public, but now the ever-burgeoning world of regulations and restrictions test even the keenest beginner. It is pleasing to see that still there are pilots motivated enough to enter 'show-business' perhaps with a Pitts or an Aeronca or some other reasonably affordable type, to campaign round the smaller shows and Country Fairs, building up experience.

It so happened that my flying club annually ran a sort of Garden Party, with a couple of hours of flying demonstrations to enhance the convivial atmosphere of vintage cars, burgers, beer and bouncy-castles. By good fortune, the resident aircraft form a pretty fair basis for a respectable display, with rare vintage types, a warbird or two, and some state-of-the-art aerobatic types.

The afternoon demonstrations were padded out with some 'also-rans', ie club members who were happy to perform some modest fly-bys in their Pride & Joys. I sadly should add that after a very testing period for the airshow industry a few years ago, such indulgences were quietly shelved by the CAA and now the rule is

'No Display Authorisation, No fly!' A shame, but those are the times we live in.

Three of us Piper Cub pilots got in a huddle, and decided that a slick Cub combination would surely 'wow' the crowds. Vintage aircraft! In formation! What's not to like? Being slow and of modest horsepower, the Cub is not a natural air display star. You can do a slow pass, and follow it with your fastest pass, but the public may well struggle to tell the difference, as there is only about 20 MPH differential between them! Perhaps door up, and then door down would get the cameras clicking?

I quizzed a few established display performers for inspiration. Tiger Nine veteran, Len Mitton pondered for a moment, and suggested 'tied-together'. I looked at him sideways. Was he joking? I did not want to seem defeatist, but that was pretty ambitious! We finally settled upon a stately jaunt round the airfield, to fill our 5 minutes, a gentle V formation with turns at the ends of the display line, and a couple of 360's at crowd centre. That would be so straight-forward, we hardly even needed to practice the routine.

However, us display pilots are a sensible lot, so we did practice, twice in fact. Over open fields, using a railway line as our 'display axis' we dropped down to a few hundred feet, and floated around broadly as per the squiggles we had drawn on our kneepads. Debriefing over tea, we were in agreement that the second sortie was an improvement on the first. However, seeing as the first had been pretty shambolic, that was not saying an awful lot. There was more to this display flying than meets the eye!

Bad weather and busy lives precluded a further practice, but we were reasonably sanguine, we pretty much had this in the bag. Display Day dawned bright and calm, which was a good omen, and the airfield began to fill by midday, the happy throng arriving for a fun afternoon.

The flightline made a colourful sight, with numerous vintage types, WW1 replicas, and a Mustang came whistling in over the hedge, to add a touch of glamour to the afternoon. Sitting at the end of the line, the three Cubs were parked together, ready for their star turn.

At 13.00 the call went out for the Pilots' Briefing. 'Hey, that's us!' Lots of scope for casual remarks - 'Catch you later. Got to go, I'm afraid. Display Pilots' Briefing, you know...'

The room was filled with maybe 25 pilots, including some well-known figures from the airshow world. Arms crossed, legs stretched out, bored expression, seemed to be the order of the day, so I gave it a go, and actually I soon got the hang of it! It turns out being a display pilot is easier than you might think. Some of the 'Old hands' also peered over their sunglasses, and occasionally chewed on their pens. All *very* impressive.



The Display Director eventually worked his way down to our slot. 'Ah yes, The Cubs. Well, you take off at 15.40 after the Tiger Moths, then you hold to the north, and we will call you in as the Mustang departs to the south-west. OK?'. It sounded OK to me.

Fortune smiled upon us, and at 15.35 the three Cubs all managed to swing into life without protest or delay. We taxied out together, the fat tyres crunching over the grass stalks, bleached and brittle at the end of a hot summer. Our power checks complete, we watched the multi-coloured Tiger Moths pick up their tails, and waft off in a gaggle, and then after a brief wait, we too lined up on the wide runway.



We all nodded that we were ready, and then away we went, soon airborne and bumping through the stirred-up air.

Orbiting at 800 feet a mile to the north, we could see the Mustang arcing over the airfield, dropping down to nearly meet its shadow, before a climbing departure with a series of rolls.

'Cubs run in, the display line is clear'. Down we went, in an arrowhead formation, me leading as I had a finer pitch prop, and lower top speed. I glanced left and right, Maverick and Iceman were reasonably tucked in. With a good head of steam, we tore (ahem...) down the display line at a mere 100 feet, ready for our first incredible manoeuvre, the amazing turn to starboard!

I checked to the right, before turning, and discovered that Maverick had seemingly wearied of being behind, and was now abreast, and rather higher. In fact all I could see now was his wheel, which then promptly slid upwards and out of view. The problem with high wing aircraft is you are blind in the turn, as the wing obstructs your view.

Display routine or not, I had no intention of turning right, knowing another aeroplane was close, but not able to see it. I carried on straight ahead, and once over the airfield boundary, quickly lifted the right wing, confirmed it was clear, and honked round in a brisk 'frying pan' turn, back down the display line.

Ice man, to my left, was zooming back to crowd centre on the 'B' axis, on a more or less opposite course to Maverick, who was powering in, to my right.

We all seem destined to arrive at about the same spot, and quite soon. We had gone from formation flypast to embryonic air combat in one easy move, from a trio of graceful swans gliding past, to manic warthogs seemingly intent on 3-way head-butting contest!

Given time we could perhaps have re-grouped and saved the day, but events overtook us. The Display Director had seen quite enough.

'Cubs STOP. STOP. STOP !' crackled through the radio. Oh, the ignominy ! Most pilots never get a STOP call in their whole careers ! Three chastened Cubs slunk into the circuit, plonked down, and taxied away to the farthest end of the flightline.

We clambered out, and the inevitable 'WTF!' post-mortem began. The problem, essentially, was that we got too much energy in the diving approach, and the 2 'hot-ship' Cubs found themselves overtaking me. We had not really practiced that bit.

Before we could avoid him, the Asst Display Director ambled over to speak to us. 'That' he said 'was... interesting'. He gazed into the distance. Another phrase seemed to be forming as he contemplated our 'performance'.

'More than interesting. Got a bit frightening, actually. Never mind, Lads! A bit more practice next time, eh?'

We did not say much. There was not much to say.

There never was a next time, and so began, and ended, my career as a display pilot. Probably not the sort of thing to put on your flying CV, but damn it, it *WAS* an air display and I *WAS* the pilot!

A bit like the fellow who, just once, totters to the end of the very highest diving board, screws up his nerves, and takes a leap. Though he may hit the water like a sack of spuds, he can always say 'I *did* that!'

On reflection, I think it is fair to say the first pass was actually pretty good. OK, more accurately, the first *part* of the first pass was pretty good. That has got to count for something.....

Us Display Pilots, we are a philosophical lot.

**Andrew Smith**



#### FOOTNOTE.

As mentioned in the article above, the dispensation for any 'amateur' aerial performers was ended a few years ago, as part of major review of UK air display procedures and regulations. Whilst the HAA generally has campaigned for freedoms and opportunities of the historic flying community, it was clear that rigorous training and assessment was the *only* route by which pilots could safely be allowed to fly in such an unforgiving environment, which is certainly not the place for 'Have-a-go Heroes'.

The concept of Display Authorisation was pioneered by the HAA, and the organisation remains a very effective point of contact for pilots wishing to enter and advance within the arena of air display flying.



# Trans-Pacific Hunter

Allan Vogel

**Singapore** was an enthusiastic operator of the Hunter, first ordering the aircraft in 1968 during a massive expansion of the city-state's armed forces; deliveries began in 1971 and were completed by 1973.

At the time, considerable international controversy was generated as Britain (and, as was later revealed, the U.S.) had refused to sell Hunters to neighbouring Malaysia, sparking fears of a regional arms race and accusations of favouritism.[95] The Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) eventually received 46 refurbished Hunters to equip two squadrons.

In the late 1970s, the Singaporean Hunter fleet was upgraded and modified by Lockheed Aircraft Services Singapore (LASS) with an additional hardpoint under the forward fuselage and another two inboard pylons (wired only for AIM-9 Sidewinders) before the main gears, bringing to a total of seven hard-points for external stores and weapons delivery.

As a result of these upgrades, they were redesignated as FGA.74S, FR.74S and T.75S.[28] The RSAF Black Knights, Singapore Air Force's aerobatic team, flew Hunters from 1973 until 1989. The first fighter squadron in the SADC, 140 Squadron was formed at Tengah in September 1970, comprising both local and British personnel. A second deal provided another 27 Hunters to the SADC; 22 Hunter FR74B recce aircraft and five Hunter T75As.

This time, 141 Squadron was formed at Tengah in November 1972.

By 1991, Singapore's fleet of combat aircraft included the General Dynamics F-16 Fighting Falcon, the Northrop F-5 Tiger II, as well as the locally modernised and upgraded ST Aerospace A-4SU Super Skyhawk; the Hunters were active but obsolete in comparison.

The type was finally retired and phased out of service in 1992, with the 21 surviving airframes being released to an Australian warbird broker, Pacific Hunter Aviation Pty, in 1995. Most of these Hunters were sold off to Lortie Aviation in Canada.

Historic & Classic Aircraft Sales Ltd are a UK based broker who in 2019 were entrusted with the sale of the last remaining RSAF Hunter F74S serial 538 (ex RAF XF369) located in Tocumwal, NSW, Australia.

Hunter 538 has served with 141 Squadron RSAF ("*Detect To Deter*") from 1972 to its retirement in 1992. A buyer came forward from Miami, Florida, who's intentions were to save the Hunter with a view to making it airworthy some time in the future.

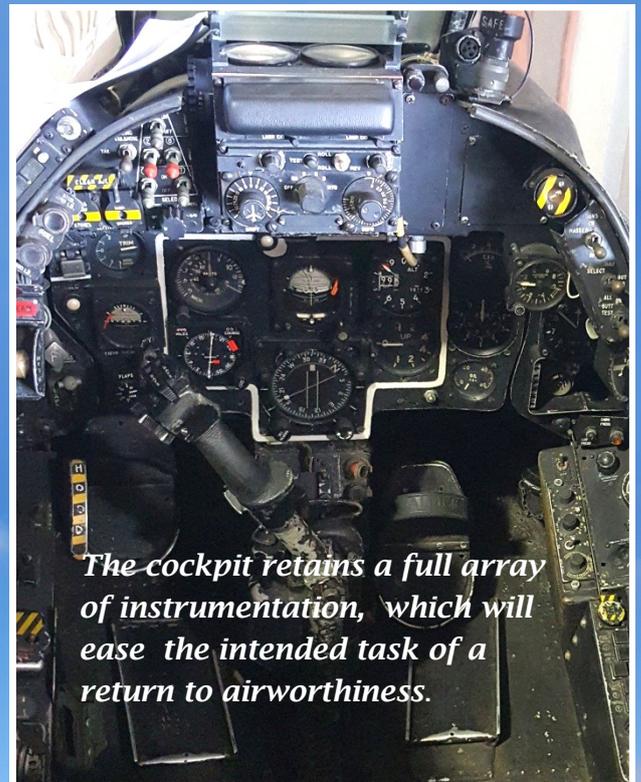
In January 2020 a team from Historic & Classic Aircraft Sales were tasked to disassemble the Hunter and pack it into three open-top containers, to be shipped to Fort Lauderdale.

The Hunter left Australia by sea on a long 60 day journey to Florida via the Panama Canal. It eventually arrived in Fort Lauderdale on the evening of the 25th of March and three containers were trucked to the Wings Over Miami museum, at Tamiami Executive airport.

The team got to work to unload the containers and the assembly began. Once the wings and tail section were fitted to 538, it was cleaned down and towed into the hangar so further work could continue.

During the cleaning process the RSAF roundel was uncovered where it had been painted over some 20 years ago. Another discovery was finding the name of its pilot and crew chief on the port side in front of the cockpit.

Should anyone reading this article know of the whereabouts of Sgt K Y Wong and Cpl Balwant, please do get in touch with Mr Berry at Wings Over Miami museum. AV



*The cockpit retains a full array of instrumentation, which will ease the intended task of a return to airworthiness.*



# The Flying Display Focus Group

**The Flying Display Focus Group (FDFG) is an advisory body sponsored by the CAA GA Unit. The Group is consulted for advice and views on matters concerning the CAA's regulation of the Flying Display Community.**

**Lawrence Hawthorn explains its origins and achievements**

The CAA created the Flying Display Focus Group (FDFG), which is made up of experienced industry practitioners and regulators. What's its purpose?

You may think "safe" and "exciting" in the same sentence in relation to flying displays is a contradiction in terms. Well, I think evidence shows it isn't. That's because much experience, risk management and creative thinking is applied by event organisers, display pilots, evaluators, flying display directors and yes, regulators ensure it is still both of those qualities.

Let's face it, many regulatory rules including the CAA's, rule book (CAP 403) Flying Displays and Special events and (CAP 1724) Flying Display standards, the Military Aviation Authority's (MAA) rule book (RA2335) and current best practise, have been informed from accidents and mistakes over the years. Regulations are developed for good reason - to protect the public and ourselves.



In the UK, we do after all, have considerable experience to draw on, from the early days of aviation right up to today. For example, the minimum display line distances that are imposed at events vary from high to low energy aircraft to protect the crowd line and the public in the event of an accident. Because of this and many other measures, the reality is, Airshows are, generally, safe and entertaining. It is recognised, however, that risk, is never "nil." Therefore, safety remains a key focus. We have sensible rules for air displays, robust risk management and best practise experience which is regularly reviewed.

Some argue the Airshow scene is 'all too sterile and it's the CAA's fault!' To me that is unfair and doesn't pass muster! It's just too easy to say and isn't often evidenced.

I'm not part of the CAA or the keeper of the corporate purse, I'm a display pilot and a flying display director. However, I do feel some fail to recognise the difficulties and responsibilities the CAA have. Like the MAA for the military, they are a regulator. The remit is fundamentally public safety, they are not a coach to us, a consultant or a training organisation! Like most regulators in the UK, the CAA is funded by the charges levied on the industry it regulates. The CAA is not funded by the UK tax payer and are legally required to cover the cost of our regulatory activity through charges on the industry.

## **The Public**

The fact is, we are achieving safe and exciting air display acts. Ask the public!

Feedback evidences, they love seeing aeroplanes, bursting balloons with their propellers, to the Red Arrows flying formation, feet from each other with their red white and blue smoke, or experiencing feeling the ground shaking from a Typhoon jet in full after burner! The evocative sight and sound of a Spitfire or WWI aeroplanes, gyrocopters helicopters and gliders. The spectacle of pyrotechnics fired from Piper Cubs and Extras, performing aerobatics in the twilight - all quite awesome they say! If you haven't seen the latter yet - it's a must! All this is enabled by positive effective regulation. Regulators apparently like aircraft too! Yes, we are achieving "safe and exciting" and it's the CAA and the MAA rules which are the important enablers.

As important, are those brave often entrepreneurial and certainly enthusiastic Event Organisers, supported by Display Pilots and Flying Display Directors and flying control committees and a myriad of important helpers and volunteers. They supply vital energy, experience, risk management, creative knowledge and skill. They also drive regulation and best practice.

## The FDFG mission and its industry

The Flying Display Focus Group was formed to strengthen the links and communication between the industry and its regulators, both civil and military. There is a rich mixture of representation from across the air display community and other interested parties.

It was formed in 2018 and born out of a need. The display flying community and event organisers could be described as a cottage industry, with many skills and much experience. Representation of its interests has often been difficult to deliver effectively, as it is a rather disparate and scattered community which has many different interests and views. One united voice or even 4 voices is difficult to achieve. It's not that such interaction doesn't already happen in various ways, it does and with many individuals and organisations such as the Light Aircraft Association (LAA) Historic Aircraft Association (HAA), the British Air Display Association (BADA) as well as numerous individual operators. However, an opportunity was taken to try to address the need for greater cohesion.

It can be difficult for the community or the regulator to receive the collective insight it needs in a useful manner. Indeed, we all know some practitioners can put across a well-considered clear set of points. Some others have no interest in doing so, or little aptitude to do so effectively. It varies.

To try to create greater cohesion the CAA spoke to a number of Airshow participants about the idea of a joint working group which found favour and put together a new group to work with the CAA on flying display matters of mutual interest. I'm pleased to say, it has already produced many benefits and is proving successful for the CAA/MAA and the Airshow community. Both parties recognise the relationship between the regulator and the industry is key and both benefit from each other's input and views.

The Flying Display Focus Group (FDFG) is an advisory body formed by the CAA GA Unit. The Group is consulted for advice and views on matters concerning the CAA's regulation of the Flying Display Community.

### Delivering a better air display environment.

Examples of great input from the community to the regulators have resulted in important changes that have shaped and delivered amendments to Flying Displays and special events (CAP403), Flying Display Standards (CAP1724) and Military Displays and Flypasts (RA 2335).

We have ensured Flying Display Directors can obtain hazard data on military aircraft in the event of an incident. Pilot currency requirements have been altered based on feedback from Flying Display Directors and Display Pilots to determine optimum currency requirements for both groups. Many processes have been reviewed and altered, some scrapped, to ensure fitness for purpose. So, it's fair to say the collaboration between regulators and the community it regulates is vital, and enhances safety, reduces unnecessary bureaucracy and contributes to exciting air displays - and long may it continue!

### *Request:*

*If you attend air shows for pleasure or have a formal role in air shows, the FDFG and myself or any of our members welcome any observations, ideas or comments you may have that would give us further insight to developing safe and exciting air displays for all of us. Please don't hold back! I hope we can count on hearing your views and on your support.*

**LH**



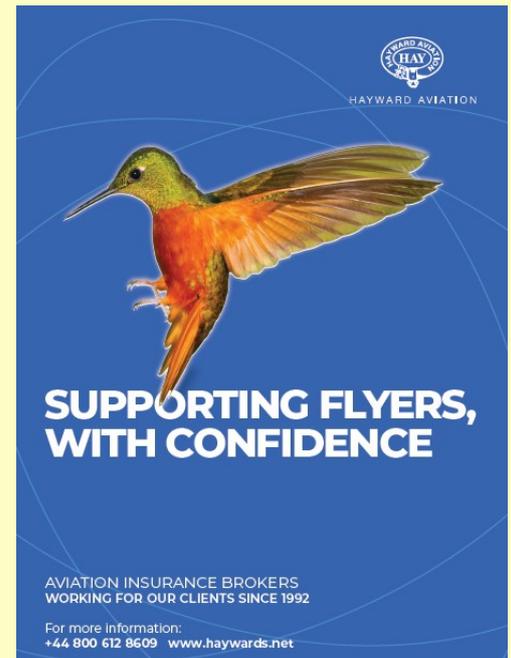
The profile and influence of the HAA has been greatly aided by a number of generous commercial sponsors, whose assistance particularly in supporting our annual Symposium has been fundamental to its enduring success. We are pleased to highlight the companies who kindly helped us with our 2019 event.

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# Coachmakers' Flying Scholarship

## Award Winner achieves Pilots Licence

Holly Palmer -Davison, who was awarded the Coachmakers' Sir Geoffrey de Havilland Flying Scholarship, has just qualified for her Pilots Licence. Holly is a Photographic Retoucher and specialises in imagery for Automotive industry advertising and we asked her for her thoughts on this achievement.-

*'The Scholarship created an opportunity for me to learn to fly and, given my vintage aviation history interest it was a unique chance to learn to fly in a Tiger Moth. Many hours of study and training have taken place since the scholarship selection day when I was overwhelmed and delighted to be selected.*

*The Scholarship has really has opened up the world of aviation to me, something I never thought would be accessible and not just made the difference, it made flying possible. It also became apparent to me that with this scholarship I was to learn a lot more than just how to fly the Tiger Moth.*



*While I am waxing lyrical about the vintage Tiger Moth, in these days of fly-by wire and modern systems I am often advised (and envied by pilots of modern types) that it preserves the joy of flight and the best of handling skills that are still as relevant now as they were in the 1930s when the DH82A first flew.*

*I can't deny that the journey to my PPL has certainly been challenging. An open cockpit biplane is not the easiest environment to learn in, but I think it is perhaps the most rewarding. Before being awarded the scholarship, I had no previous experience of flying other than as a passenger, so it has also been all I've known and for that, I feel privileged.*



*Knowing how to safely and confidently operate such an aircraft not just in the air but on the ground is paramount, something the Cambridge Flying Group have been excellent at instilling from the very start of my training.*

*I firmly believe the knowledge of sound airmanship that I have gained has been a testament to the aircraft and the environment the scholarship has enabled me to learn in - nothing is without extra consideration when operating a vintage aircraft without luxuries such as brakes... just to name one example! There is certainly no time for complacency when it comes to operating any aeroplane and particularly so with a Tiger Moth.*

*Of course, the PPL milestones will always be very special but the fact I have been so lucky to be able to do it all in the iconic Tiger Moth that the Coachmakers' Scholarship made possible for me is the real honour. Its quirky nature has given me excellent grounding for other aircraft I hope to go on to fly and every flight has left me smiling at the end - even if it did prove frustrating at the time!*

*My instructor and mentor, Steve Barratt has been an incredibly inspirational figure at the group and is someone I can't thank enough for his help and dedication throughout my training. Steve's enthusiasm for vintage aviation is infectious and his willingness to share what appears to be endless knowledge, has given me the best start I could hope for.'*

**HPD**

# HOW THE HAA BEGAN AND HOW IT EVOLVED

By HAA Chairman Wally Epton

*In the 22 December 1979 edition of Flight International magazine the late Darrol Stinton wrote an article titled "Old But Safe" announcing the formation of the Historic Aircraft Association. I was there at its beginning and a very proud holder of a HAA Certificate of Registration issued under the Register of Pilots considered fit to fly and display certain groups or types of historic aircraft.*

*In 1994 Darrol wrote an update to his article that lay forgotten and was never published. But as guidance it certainly was useful, and I offer it now. Darrol believed that for historic reasons old aircraft should not be adulterated. He believed strongly that their flying qualities should be respected and valued. This is what he wrote -*

## **OLD BUT SAFE – HISTORIC AND RELEVANT**

**In the Beginning - Too many Accidents**

The Historic Aircraft Association was launched by Darrol Stinton, with the object of keeping historic aircraft in safe flying condition so that future generations might see them in the air. There were too many accidents and incidents, and a number expected to happen – some of which eventually did. Accidents had attracted unfavourable comment, both officially and unofficially. Founders of the HAA knew that if the historic aircraft movement did not set about disciplining itself, then authority would impose its own constraints.

## **History – So What?**

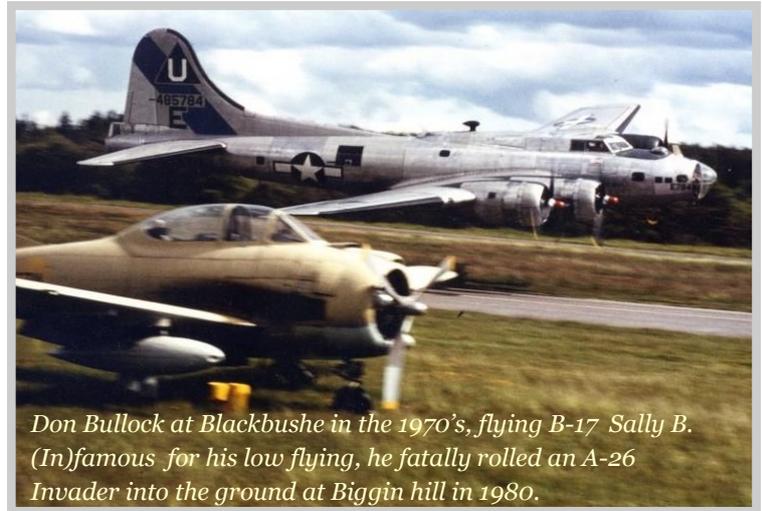
There is a passion for old aircraft everywhere that facilities and scope exist. This more often than not, is in countries once at war in the air. In the USA the Confederate Air Force (now Commemorative Air Force- CAF) for example. All historic aircraft organisations, including the HAA, have flight safety as a primary purpose. If flying such aircraft is unsafe for any reason, then they cease to survive and what is the good of that?

Often something old, less developed, simpler, highlights basic truths that become obscured with development. Study of these older forms can be, therefore, very instructive not only because they 'speak' more clearly to the discerning eye and mind, but they also plant knowledge and experience from which intuition can suddenly emerge – perhaps in a crisis and under stress.

Technical truth is paramount and it is in the domain of flying qualities: performance, handling (control, stability, trimability) and functioning of systems and equipment that the success or failure of an aircraft lies.

An example until further evidence appeared, was the belief that 'all Sopwith aeroplanes were tail heavy'. They were not. Myths appear and are hard to dispel. Dispelling them is the proper task of operational organisations like the HAA and CAF. It should be possible for a properly qualified pilot to fly a *Bleriot XI* or a *Lancaster* in the year 2020 and to know how they handled and performed (editor's note – remember Darrol was writing this in 1994).

**First** there is a moral obligation to impart information



*Don Bullock at Blackbushe in the 1970's, flying B-17 Sally B. (In)famous for his low flying, he fatally rolled an A-26 Invader into the ground at Biggin hill in 1980.*

which might prevent an accident or prevent someone else making a mess.

**Second** is the pragmatic reason that if we tell others about our errors they might come and tell us of theirs. Learning from others whilst not giving information in return makes us 'information parasites'.

**Third** is the economic reason that safety measures cost owners money. If we tell others about the action we took after an accident then they might spend as much as we have done to prevent the accident happening again.

**Fourth**, if we have a serious accident the whole movement, the whole industry loses esteem. New preventive legislation might then be introduced by the regulators which affects us all adversely. (**Editors note – witness Shoreham and the aftermath illustrating how prophetic Darrol's words were in 1994**)

**Fifth**, to be told from the 'Horses Mouth' has more credibility than reading a list of generalised "Do's" and "Don't's". David Davis (CAA) wanted a list of "good eggs"; pilots who knew what they were talking about, and who could be relied upon to report accurately on the flying qualities of such aircraft, so giving the CAA a baseline from which to work and come up with a solution.

By extension, what was wanted were mature pilots who could be relied upon to display rare aircraft in representative working order as one might handle a unique artefact in a museum! The HAA did not want the pilot with a flawed personality who would use the aircraft as a vehicle to display himself. And so began HAA Register of 'good egg' pilots.

### **What has the HAA done for the Movement?**

The first action was to persuade the CAA to introduce a form of licence which allowed owners and pilots to cover their expenses.

Second, the HAA introduced what is now known as a 'Display Authorization' (DA). It handed over the scheme of 'Register of Pilots' to the CAA on condition it never charged for the issue or removal of a DA.

The removal process of a pilot's DA is within a system devised and agreed between the CAA and an HAA working group of "long in the tooth" members.

The CAA accepted and agreed the display disciplinary procedures of the HAA.

The HAA Council has influenced the contents of CAP403.

HAA has intervened following alleged misdemeanours by members and prevented miscarriages of justice by the CAA.

The armed services, in spite of threatened decimation, must be encouraged to lend whatever support they can. Museums are supreme sources of knowledge. The Battle of Britain Flight (like the Red Arrows) together with the Navy and Army display teams are valuable not only for encouraging recruiting. Around them is gathered information of historic value. There is scope for even more two-way active involvement and support.

### ***Chairman's footnote. I was there...***

*I was introduced to the HAA by my good friend the late George Ellis and I was granted Certificate of Registration number 100/P with approvals to fly SE, ME tail wheel and skid aircraft as well as SE jet in Fly Past, Aerobatics, and Formation categories.*

*I joined the Council initially as treasurer in the early part of this century and was elected to chairman in 2006. Founder members John Ward, Darrol Stinton, Duncan Simpson, Peter Thorn, Desmond Penrose and John Farley all influenced me along the way in providing excellent guidance and advice. That's because they were there at the beginning and knew clearly what was needed. **W E***

## **Prototype Beagle Pup G-AVDF Flies Again!**

On 8th April 1967 Beagle Aircraft Ltd rolled out their new two-seater light aircraft B121C G-AVDF at Shoreham. 'Pee Wee' Judge climbed into the pilot's seat, accompanied by David Cummings, and the Pup made her maiden flight, returning after 75 minutes to a delighted crowd. Peter Masefield, Beagle's Managing Director, believed that this would be the start of 'a new resurgence of British light aviation.'

G-AVDF flew as a test aircraft until May 1969, visiting the Paris Air Show and the Swiss Alps for hot weather trials and was hailed by the aviation press as a real success. In 1969 she was converted as a test bed for the Beagle Bulldog by replacing the 0-200A 100 hp engine with the more powerful 200hp. Strengthening panels were fitted inside, the larger rudder fitted along with strakes and new cowlings. She flew for just over two hours in this configuration until the Beagle Bulldog prototype took over in May 1969. Then, with the demise of Beagle, she was partially dismantled and left in the back of the hangar.

Over the next few years she was stored at various locations, including Duxford and Brooklands. In 1993 DF was re-discovered at Brooklands by David Collings who bought her with a view to restoration to flight. As she was a unique, hand built, pre-production aircraft, with nothing forward of the firewall, this was always going to be a challenge. However, a way forward was found in 2015 when she was put on the LAA's Permit to Fly register and a five year restoration programme started at ATSO engineering at Turweston.

On 19th May, in the midst of a global pandemic, she made her first post restoration flight with the LAA's Chief Engineer Francis Donaldson at the controls. Now newly repainted, in exactly the same scheme as in 1967, she is ready to be put on display at air shows in 2021, as we continue to share this impressive restoration story.

### **Anne Hughes**

G-AVDF is operated by the Beagle Pup Prototype Club and sponsored by Vega Solutions Ltd.



# Historic Aircraft Association

*‘Not on a Plinth - In the Air’*



*A timeless study of Mark Miller's magnificent DH-89 Rapide, on short finals for the Vintage Aircraft Club Fly-In at Turweston in early September. Though public access has been severely curtailed in 2020, there has been much activity in the historic aircraft community, which is very much 'alive and kicking'.*