

BRITISH WOMEN PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO. 93

WINTER 2009



AOPA/BWPA WINGS AWARD SCHEME

WOMEN IN BALLOONING

'CHIPFEST 2009'

BWPA AWARDS PRESENTATION

Brooklands Museum

Brooklands Road

Weybridge

Surrey

KT13 OQN

[www.bwpa.co.uk](http://www.bwpa.co.uk)

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## BWPA aims:

- To promote practical schemes to assist women to gain flying licences of all types
- To advise women on the training required and the openings available to them in aviation
- To enable women in aviation to meet and exchange information of mutual interest

British Women Pilots' Association

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**AND MAKE SURE YOU LABEL YOUR PHOTOS!**

Deadline for next newsletter is March 31st.

**FRONT COVER PHOTO:  
NEW MEMBER ALLIE DUNNINGTON FLYING HER  
'CLOUDHOPPER' ONE-PERSON BALLOON (SEE ARTICLE ON  
PAGE 12)**

## FROM THE EDITOR...



Greetings and Happy New Year! As I write this on the second day of 2010, I'm looking out at steadily falling snow. Very pretty, but I don't think I'll be doing much flying at the moment. Still, despite a hard winter so far, it's only a couple of days since I last flew. On New Year's Eve morning I was about to go to the supermarket when the phone rang. It was a helicopter owner friend; the sun was shining, did I want to go flying, as it looked like it might be the last opportunity we would have for a while since the weather forecast was awful. I dropped everything and went. It was just a local hop over the snowy hills of Derbyshire and Staffordshire, with a landing at a friend's farm for a cup of tea – well, you can do that sort of thing in a

helicopter. But it was enjoyable and kept our skills current. My cupboards are still bare, but I'm sure I won't starve!

At this time of year, you really have to make the most of every opportunity. I know some private pilots simply give up flying over winter. I remember one day when I was a student, and a qualified pilot came into the flying school. He hadn't flown for over four months, and wanted a bit of practice. "I have my own plane", he told the staff, "but I really need an instructor to go with me". At the time, I simply couldn't believe that anyone who owned their own aircraft with all the money and work that entailed would stop flying for several months just because it was winter. After all, I was only learning, and I had managed to get airborne every couple of weeks, despite a few cancellations. It can be done! So it's worth keeping an eye on forecasts and being ready to change plans if there is a tiny window of good weather. Shopping trips can always wait.

Even if you're snowed in and really can't manage to fly, you can always settle down with this latest newsletter. We have a bumper crop of articles – from chipmunk flying to entering the Dawn to Dusk flying competition to...ballooning. New member Allie Dunnington is a keen balloon pilot, and has written about her own aviation addiction on page 12. She has also promised us more in future newsletters, and maybe a BWPA weekend of ballooning later in the year. I was delighted to receive her article, as it was one type of flying that we haven't had featured; at least not since I've been in the BWPA. It's great to hear about any type of aviation of course, but especially exciting if it's something unusual. So if any of you fly gyroplanes, hang-gliders, paramotors, broomsticks, magic carpets, or happen to be booked on Richard Branson's first passenger space flight...we want to hear about it! The editor's details are on page 2.

Talking of contributing to the newsletter, you may recall that we had a writing competition last year, with a prize for the best article of the year. We had some first-rate contributions, and it was a hard job picking out a winner. But the prize of a piece of aviation jewellery from the BWPA sales stall eventually went to Helen Vosper, for her article entitled "How Not to do a CPL" in the Autumn 2009 newsletter. Helen, you should have received your prize by now; if not, do please let me know.

There won't be a writing competition this year, but I hope that won't stop any of you sending in contributions. If you don't know what to write about, there is a list of suggestions and our 'regular' columns (somewhat irregular, since we don't always get contributions for them) on page 4. But you are also welcome to write about anything else, so long as it's aviation related. One woman, a non-member (for obvious reasons) offered/threatened recently to write an article on why she felt the BWPA should not exist! I sincerely hope she sends it in, and if so, get your pencils sharpened to say why you disagree, if you do. Discussion in these pages is always welcomed; we did have a 'Burning Issues' regular column for a while, but sadly, it died. I'm happy to resurrect it if we get contributions.

Enjoy your flying in 2010, and blue skies and tailwinds to you all,

Helen

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# Contributions

*Your newsletter needs YOU! We want YOU to write to us.*

*It doesn't matter how new you are, or how little you've written before. We'd still LOVE to hear from you.*

*The BWPA newsletter has several regular columns, so why not contribute to one of the following...*

*Jobs in Aviation — from making the tea to flying an Airbus.*

*My Flying Life/Her Flying Life — whether for six months or sixty years.*

*Event Reports — if you went, what did you think?*

*Book Reviews — if you read it, share it.*

*Aviation Agony Aunts - let us solve your aviation problems and aerial dilemmas.*

*My Most Memorable Flight. — if you remember it, write about it.*

*Humour — it's good to laugh; please send contributions.*

*News — I can't report it if I don't know about it.*

*Letters — drop me a line about...anything.*

*BWPA Swap Shop — buy, sell, swap, give away...anything aviation related. 'Small Ads' are free to BWPA members.*

*And we always need aviation photos too! Remember, a picture is worth 1000 words, and I'm always short of good photos.*

*Or..... Have you flown a new type, done a new rating, or acquired a new qualification? Have you been for a trial lesson, done your first solo, passed your PPL? Have you got back in the air after a long break? Have you flown somewhere new? Tell us!*

*Helen Krasner*

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER**  
— March 31st 2010

# THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN...

Well, here we are again – at the beginning of a new year with new challenges and excitement ahead. My first question, which is unanswerable, has to be: “What will the weather be like this year?” At the time of writing (just before Christmas) the country was in chaos due to heavy snowfalls, and the helicopter was grounded because the taxiway from the hangar was a sheet of ice. A month before that and at various times throughout the summer the airfield was closed to fixed-wing traffic due to being waterlogged! It’ll be a plague of locusts next...

I am hoping for good flying weather this year as we have a packed events calendar, which includes a number of fly-in or fly-out opportunities, not to mention the launch of the BWPA’s collaboration with AOPA to encourage members to participate in the Wings Scheme. However, more of all that later...

Before contemplating further on events to come, I have to report that we had another very successful Christmas Lunch and Awards Presentation in December, and we were delighted that Martin Robinson, CEO of AOPA, was able to be with us to present the awards. Our most prestigious award, the Brabazon Cup, went to Flt Lt Kirsty Moore, the first woman to be selected to fly with the Red Arrows and we presented our new trophy, the Special Recognition Award, for the first time. Details of all our winners are given further on. Martin commented afterwards that he had had no idea how much we did as an organisation to promote aviation to all ages and how impressed he was with the range of awards we present. Very gratifying!



This year we are hoping to streamline the way in which we disseminate information to members, and have even had requests from some who would prefer to get e-newsletters rather than receiving copies in the post. Personally I prefer a hard copy that drops through my letterbox and we will continue to mail out quarterly newsletters to all members who want them. Also, newflashes will still be sent at regular intervals to remind members of BWPA events and to advertise events arranged by other associations and organisations. We also plan to send booking forms out by email as well as making them available on our website so that we can reduce the extra postage costs incurred by mailing them out to all. There will of course be the opportunity to opt in or out of all of the above and details will be sent out with this year’s membership renewal letter, so keep an eye out for it.

As you can see from the events list we are going for a very varied programme this year, so hopefully there will be something there for everybody. We have more flying in the programme (weather permitting!) than in previous years and this is intended to tie in with the Wings Scheme (see article), the aim being to dangle the carrot of something other than a few circuits or tour of the local area to keep one’s hand in. To this end we are teaming up with other organisations for some events so that we can benefit from combined resources, both financial and manpower-wise.

We are also trialling the concept of ‘one person, one event’, which means that a different person has taken responsibility for organising each of our events this year. Please let us know whether you notice a difference or not, as we are hoping it will prevent ‘event fatigue’ setting in on the part of the organiser, which could lead to dull/boring/badly-run events and nobody wants that to happen!

As always, if you have any ideas for events (we have three pencilled in for 2011 already!) or anything else, please let us know.

In the meantime, enjoy the coming year and may the weather be all that we could wish for.

Caroline

# CHIPFEST 2009

By Janice Doyle

On first reaction one might be forgiven to thinking 'Chipfest' was a competition for the best chips! However, this was not the case. 'Chipfest 2009' was a three-day formation event organised over the space of some six months and run in conjunction with the Marshall Group of Companies Centenary.

It all started after I attended a similar annual event in Belgium last year, called 'Chipmeet' last year. The idea was that several sorties were arranged to learn how to do formation flying. They also organised a group of chippies to take part in tail-chasing, and some aerobatics as well. The final formation had all chipmunks in a mass formation. I got to thinking how could I could build on this, and came up with the idea of running a similar event in the UK.

It was after speaking to Rod Brown, CFI at Denham Flying School, who also has a wealth of experience on flying Chipmunks, that the plan began to take shape. It actually came to fruition in September last year, when we ran a chippy formation event at Sywell aerodrome. Although our first attempt was very 'Heath Robinson', there was so much enthusiasm over the event that we decided we would run it again on a more regular basis - so the next one was planned for Duxford Airfield in March 2009.

As well as formation practice away from the airfield, we wanted to do a 500 ft flypast at Duxford, and also at Cambridge Airfield. As we needed permission from Cambridge, I arranged to have a meeting with Malcolm Gault, the Ops Manager, to ask if we could do it there. He was very excited at the prospect, and all was set to ahead. Unfortunately, as the weather has the final say in such matters, we had to cancel this event at the last moment. Although it put paid to what could have been a great event, fate plays an interesting part in such things...

Malcolm then told me that they were organising the Marshalls Centenary in September, and asked if I fancied incorporating the planned three-day formation event to coincide with the celebrations. That was when we shifted to Cambridge, and Chipfest 2009 was born.

As there were going to be many attendees from the DeHavilland fraternity, and it was potentially going to be a spectacular event, we thought we would make it extra special and invite as many chipmunks to come along as possible from all over the UK and globally. As it was going to be a mammoth operation to organise, Rod and

I began to make a list of what we needed to do. Ken Kelso, a fellow chippy pilot and friend of ours, made the fatal mistake of saying: "Any help you want, please let me know." As Ken is an IT guru and has many other talents, we asked if he could create a website so that we could put all our blurb on there, ranging from information on venue, hotel accommodation, transport, lunch, dinner etc to the more important stuff like SOPs, sortie areas, air to air photography, NOTAMs etc. In a very short while he got the website up and running, and called it [www.chipfest.co.uk](http://www.chipfest.co.uk).



Fabulous! What next? Well, the biggest challenge for me in the early days was getting Marshalls to sponsor us for some badges that we wanted to have made up to put on our flying overalls. I wanted to ask Marshalls if they would pay for them,

and Rod's reply was that there was no way on earth that they would! I thought about it, and decided to design a badge and go from there. After pouring through many books to get an outline picture of the chipmunk, Ken and I managed to find a decent image. Now, what about the rest of the design? I never dreamed that I would get my inspiration at the kitchen table. Armed with paper and pen I set to work, and five minutes later the design for the chippy badge was born. Now, off to Malcolm to show him our design and hopefully work some magic. Malcolm loved it (especially the inclusion of the Marshall's emblem) and Marshalls gave us funds for the badge. Phew!



The other great challenge, and for me the most amusing event, happened when Rod and I were setting up the briefing room the day before the event. It suddenly dawned on us that as we were organising four sorties and thus needing four briefing rooms, we needed to have four whiteboards to write the sortie notes on. Aghast, we suddenly realised we only had two whiteboards...and time was marching on!

Marshalls came to our rescue and managed to track down two spare boards over in the training school located across the road. But we needed a car to transport the boards, and - horrors on horrors - Rod had lost his car keys. So we decided to take my car – and this was where the fun started. I have a two-seater Mazda MX5 – hardly the ideal car for transporting such large objects. Well, by hook or by crook we needed to get the boards, so off we went in my car. It didn't look too bad for the first board, which fitted quite easily into the boot of my car, but where on earth were we going to put the second board? Putting the roof down, I told Rod to sit in the car and we would put the board in front of him. We then set off slowly across the road to the briefing room. The look on the security guards' faces was amazing, particularly as I was gauging the speed bumps, but the funniest part was that as I increased speed the board started to resound like a boomerang. It was a great relief to know that this was going to be a very short drive. The happy ending to this event was that we did eventually find Rob's keys – in his coat pocket!

I could go on with all the things we had to do to get it all organised, after numerous meetings, bribery, eye fluttering, begging, stealing, and borrowing, we were finally ready to start our Chipfest 2009 event.

Next morning I flew into Cambridge with my son Philip, which for me was a memorable occasion as it was the first time that I had taken my son up in the chippie. He had been appointed by us as the official photographer for the Chipfest, and he thoroughly enjoyed the short flight into Cambridge. I found it highly amusing when my son, with an anxious look on his face, told me that one of the pilots wanted him to take air to air photographs whilst they were performing aerobatics. He was worried but I told him not to worry; he would love it. I did giggle when he was being taxied out and doing the hail Mary bit. But when he came back his eyes were out on organ stoppers, and he looked very pale and whispered that he would never do that again!

The weather was perfect for us, and over the three-day period 27 chipmunks attended the event. It was a hive of activity and everyone took part in sorties. The climax to the event was having 15 chipmunks taking part in a 'Balbo' on the Saturday afternoon. It was such a great feeling seeing 15 chipmunks waiting on the runway to take off. They took off and formed into a swan, and then an arrow. As part of our display we performed a 500 ft flypast over Duxford Airfield and then back at Cambridge at 500 ft, as we had always planned to do. As I was a passenger, it was fascinating to see people stop and look up at us, and interesting to see how everything seemed to stop for us. Ending on a humorous note, it was reported back to us that as we were flying over Cambridge there was a football match taking place, and as they looked up on hearing the drone of 15 chippies, they were reported to stop the match and whistle The Dam Busters March. How cool is that?



On Sunday – the last day – there was the Marshalls celebration, and the airfield was filled with a mouth watering collection of warbirds. A personal favourite of mine was seeing the Vulcan take to the skies. The climax of the day was witnessing a magnificent half hour display given by the Red Arrows.

Although it had been an exhausting six months of preparation I loved every minute of it and it was all very worthwhile. I would like to say a very big heartfelt thanks to all who helped and supported us in getting this event off the ground, particularly to all the Marshalls staff and to the marshalling team.

What next? Well, we are going to repeat the whole thing again next year. So watch this space - we will be back...

# AOPA / BWPA WINGS AWARD SCHEME

by Caroline Gough-Cooper



This year sees the start of an exciting collaboration between the BWPA and AOPA (Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association) encourage PPL or NPPL holders to develop their flying. This article is intended to give some background to the project and a broad outline of the scheme.

A couple of years ago I was thumbing through a copy of AOPA's General Aviation magazine when my attention was caught by a short piece on their Wings Award Scheme. The more I read the more enthusiastic I became as I realised what a wonderful incentive it was to encourage pilots to use their hard-earned licences to increase their aviation knowledge, develop their airmanship and handling skills, and have fun, all at the same time.

I thought that the Wings Awards would be an excellent scheme to offer to BWPA members, but as I read on I realised that it was for AOPA members only. However, the BWPA is a corporate member of AOPA, so I wondered if there was a way in which our members could benefit from this membership while helping to promote AOPA's aims to a wider aviation community at the same time. I approached AOPA and I was invited to put a proposal to an AOPA Members' Working Group meeting last August. After some discussion it was accepted in principle and the details have subsequently been agreed. What follows is an outline of how the scheme works:

## OBJECTIVES

AOPA introduced the Wings Award Scheme so that pilots could have their continuing progress recognised through the award of Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum wings and these are awarded for development in the following areas:

- Air touring experience
- Additional training and qualification
- The practice of good airmanship
- Broadening pilot's activities and interests
- Encouraging personal development and flight safety awareness through advanced seminars

## PARTICIPATION IN THE SCHEME

The scheme is open to all members of AOPA who hold either Private or Professional Pilot's Licences for powered aircraft or rotorcraft.

In addition, the award of Bronze wings is available to all Licence holders whether or not they are members of AOPA or, indeed, of the BWPA. All that is required is proof of licence issue and Bronze wings can be yours.

Thereafter, the agreement that the BWPA has with AOPA is that BWPA members who hold one of the licences detailed above but who are not members of AOPA may work towards and be issued with Silver wings. Because the BWPA will be processing the applications on behalf of AOPA the £30 admin fee normally payable for each application will be waived.

If BWPA members want to take the challenge further and work towards the issue of Gold or Platinum wings then they must join AOPA. However, if AOPA membership is taken out within 12 months of the issue of Silver wings then a discount will be applied to the first year's membership fee.

## REQUIREMENTS

There are four categories against which criteria are set for the award of wings and these are:

- Minimum Flight Times, both Total and as Pilot-In-Command (PIC)
- Achievements
- Seminar Attendance
- Air Touring Experience

In all of the flying activities undertaken in pursuit of the AOPA Wings Scheme, it is essential that safety is the primary concern. In meeting the requirements of the scheme the applicant is expected to seek to attain high standards in training, engage in thorough preparation, make the correct use of standard operating procedures and display a high standard of airmanship.

## 1 - Minimum Flight Times

For Bronze wings licence issue is sufficient

For Silver wings the applicant must have a minimum of 120 hours Total Flight Time and a minimum of 70 hours PIC

For Gold wings the applicant must have a minimum of 300 hours Total Flight Time and a minimum of 200 hours PIC

For Platinum wings the applicant must have a minimum of 500 hours Total Flight Time and a minimum of 400 hours PIC

A pilot with a Professional Licence may count only those hours in powered aircraft or rotorcraft which have not accrued in the course of commercial activities. Flight Instructors may include those hours which have accrued while giving flight instruction in powered aircraft or rotorcraft.

- Single Engine Piston (SEP)
- Single Engine Turboprop (SET)
- Multi-Engine Piston (MEP)
- Touring Motor Glider (TMG)
- Self Launching Motor Glider (SLMG)
- Microlight

## 2 - Achievements

As the pilot develops his/her flying experience from Bronze through to Platinum Wings, each stage of the scheme requires two new Achievements to be demonstrated. The Achievements recognised in this category are listed below. They do not have to be accomplished in any particular order. However, the application for Silver Wings must show that two have been met, a total of four for Gold (which could include the two cited in a previous application for Silver) and, similarly, six for Platinum. For the purposes of this category the qualifications recognised as achievements include:

### Flying qualifications:

- Night Qualification
- IMC Rating
- Addition to JAR-FCL PPL of another rating (SEP, TMG, MEP, SLMG or Microlight)
- Addition to NPPL of another rating (SSEA, SLMG or Microlight)
- NPPL converted to JAR-FCL PPL
- Instrument Rating
- Flight Instructor Rating
- Display Authorisation
- Ultimate High Advanced PPL Syllabus
- Royal Aero Club Records, Racing & Rally Association Air Race School
- Seaplane Rating

### Certificates:

- AOPA Radio Navigation Certificate
- AOPA Basic Aerobatic Certificate & Standard Aerobatic Certificate



- AOPA Ground Instructor Certificate

**Training:**

- Two items of differences training on complex features (eg.retractable gear, VP propeller, turbo charger, pressurisation, nose-wheel to tail-dragger and vice versa), aeroplanes with single power lever controls and aircraft with electronic ('glass') flight instruments.
- Conversion to three additional and distinct types of aircraft (state types in application e.g. PA28, C172, DHCI etc)



**Activities:**

- Complete one Royal Aero Club handicapped Air Race
- Complete one British Aerobatics Association Aerobic Competition
- Complete one British Precision Flying Association Precision Flying Competition
- Complete one Royal Institute of Navigation Top Nav Competition
- Complete any other organised event with the prior approval of AOPA.

Achievements are not limited to the above lists and it is intended that participation in the BWPA's Chairwoman's Challenge will be a recognised activity. Alternative achievements may be considered when submitted with the relevant supporting documentation.

**3 - Seminar attendance**

For the Silver Wings Award the applicant should be able to demonstrate that one approved seminar has been attended, two different types for the Gold and a minimum of three for Platinum. Currently approved Seminars are:

- CAA Safety Evening
- GASCo Flight Safety Forum
- AOPA Flight Instructor Refresher Seminar (non-instructors may attend for a minimum of one day)
- Military Civil Air Safety Day
- Weather School courses (various providers)
- PPL Masterclass
- RAeC "Three R's" Race School Day
- NATS visit with infringements presentation
- Light Aviation Sea Survival Course
- Aircraft Maintenance Engineering Course
- Any other Seminar previously approved by AOPA

In November 2008 the BWPA ran a GPS seminar in conjunction with the Royal Institute of Navigation that was given approval as a qualifying seminar for the purposes of the Wings Scheme. It is intended to run one AOPA-approved BWPA seminar a year.

Evidence of attendance should be obtained. This may be in the form of a letter, or a certificate, or a stamp in pilot's log book etc

**4 - Air Touring Experience**

To encourage cross-country flying, three separate qualifying

flights as PIC have been defined in terms of minimum criteria for total distance and number of intermediate landings between the point of departure and the final destination. The intermediate landings must be made at different airfields from the point of departure and the final destination. Any one of these flights will qualify for the issue of Silver wings, two for Gold and all three for Platinum.

At the time of writing the criteria are in the process of being updated to take into consideration the fact that many people share long distance flights, which means that an individual may not have flown as PIC on every sector of a flight. Amended details have yet to be published but the following give an idea of the requirements:

- A.** A flight of total distance greater than 300 nm with at least two intermediate landings, OR A flight of total distance greater than 200 nm with a sea crossing (>20 nm) and at least one intermediate landing.
- B.** A flight of total distance greater than 500 nm with at least three intermediate landings, OR A flight of total distance greater than 400 nm with a sea crossing (>20 nm) and at least three intermediate landings.
- C.** A flight of total distance greater than 600 nm with at least four intermediate landings, OR A flight of total distance greater than 500 nm with a sea crossing (>20 nm) and at least four intermediate landings.

A pilot holding a Professional Licence may not include either flights conducted within commercial activities, nor in aircraft other than those covered by the ratings specified in Minimum Flight Times

**TO SUMMARISE:**

BWPA members are able to apply for the issue of AOPA Silver wings even if they are not individual members of AOPA because the BWPA as an organisation is a corporate member of AOPA.

- In order to qualify for the issue of Silver wings each applicant must have proof of the following:
- A minimum of 120 hours Total Flight Time and a minimum of 70 hours PIC
- 2 x Achievements
- 1 x Seminar Attendance
- 1 x Air Touring Experience flight



To apply for either Bronze or Silver wings please contact me, Caroline Gough-Cooper, for an application form or further details. Supporting evidence will need to be submitted for verification.

**FINALLY...**

I firmly believe that this is an excellent scheme for encouraging recreational pilots to make the most of their licences and I would love to see ALL licence-holding BWPA members apply for their Bronze wings as a first step. Thereafter, I hope that as many members as possible will go on to achieve Silver wings.

# THE 99S INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

by Sharon Nicholson



I recently received a letter from Seattle, and my immediate thought as soon as I saw the postmark was: 'Who do I know in Seattle?' You see, that's one of the wonderful things about aviation - given enough time to indulge ourselves in this most addictive of hobbies, it is just a small step from discovering a new world and wealth of opportunity, to meeting people who inspire us, or are inspired by us. In fact, the letter was from a Boeing test pilot based in Seattle, and included an invitation to visit the Boeing facility there, should I get the opportunity to go. The general demeanour of this letter reflected the typical warmheartedness of the reception that I received during my visit to the 99s Annual International Conference, which was held in Chicago for summer 2009. I met many eloquent women with stories to amuse, amaze, and arouse inner passions, which made the experience quite awe-inspiring.

It was easy to settle into a nice routine of get-togethers for coffee in the hospitality suite, breakfast meetings, fly markets, or simple sight-seeing tours: an architectural boat tour to learn about the Chicago buildings, museum runs, and 'Tea with Amelia at The Drake'- a fine affair where I found that my English tea drinking habits made me an instant expert and source of fascination. The first day included a formal dinner cruise on Lake Michigan. This proved to be an excellent way to get the socialising started, and we were privy to a spectacular view of a fireworks display with the Chicago skyline as a backdrop.

The variety and wealth of advice and information that were on offer by seminars or after dinner speakers during the conference was absolutely wonderful. One such event that I attended was an FAA Safety Seminar, which was both informative and amusing. Also, the FAA subsequently sent on the course material, so that I can use it too.

A number of speeches were made at the main Awards Banquet, which came at the end of the five-day event of the 99's Conference. This was similar to the BWPA Christmas Lunch, where we also present awards. There was, for example, an 'Award of Inspiration' presented to Eileen Collins — the first woman to command the Space Shuttle. Eileen had originally commented, when asked about being the 'first and only' female Shuttle Commander: "Hopefully not for long!" She had looked forward to losing the title of the only female commander, and this has now happened, in 2007. This was followed by an award given to Donna Shirley, the project manager of the Mariner 10 Mission to Venus and Mercury. Donna gave an inspirational talk about her part in the Mars Millennium Project, and how NASA were looking for suggestions on freeing the rover-craft 'Spirit' which has had its right front wheel stuck in the Martian soil since March 2006. A review of NASA's 'Free Spirit' website shows that some progress was made in December 2009, so maybe the ladies came up with some suggestions!

Inevitably an American affair will be considerably larger than the UK BWPA event, so this was perhaps more like the FEWP annual congress. In much the same way as FEWP does, the job of taking on the organisation of this event involved different groups taking turns, which seemed to be the fairest way. The group who will be organising the 2010 Annual International Conference have already got their plans underway for Hawaii, which definitely has an appeal in itself. The island-hopping style of flying there is quite fun and challenging, especially if based from the busy Honolulu Airport. I would definitely recommend this as a reason to go, if you can warrant the expense and justification for a slightly different holiday.

# THE SOUTHPORT AIR SHOW

By Carol Kitching

(former editor of the Australian Women Pilots' Association newsletter)



The Southport Airshow, billed as the largest in southwest England, proved to be a great spectacle for a visitor from Australia. Yes, there was the 22 miles of flat, sandy coastline, the 90,000 spectators parked on the beach, plenty of picnic lunches, deck chairs and dogs. The tide was way out and there was a light aircraft runway for the early arrivals. I spent Saturday, September 26th 2009, at the Show and what made it special was the flying – precision aerobatics, formation flying and the wingwalking. And, I have to add, the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. More about that later...

Southport has a long heritage as a seaside resort stretching back to the introduction of 'sea bathing' in the late 1700s. From this tentative beginning to the end of the 19th century, Southport has established itself both as select seaside resort and residential town. It has become one of the best known seaside towns on the west coast, lying just north of Liverpool.

Come September each year, it draws huge crowds by staging an annual air show and this year it was air show number 17. Not only did it attract the usual aviation thrill seekers with their families, but also the history buffs. With thoughts cast back to the 1940s, we watched as two Spitfires and a Hurricane revived the sights and sounds of the Battle of Britain. 2009 has proved to be a very busy year for the Flight with these 'obsolete types'. Next year they'll be marking the 70th Anniversary of D-Day and Arnhem.

Sunday's highlights included the antics of another legend, the 'tin triangle', otherwise known as the Vulcan – back in the air after a career of 33 years service with the RAF. This last Vulcan was sold off by the Ministry of Defence in 1993 to a small team of enthusiasts. After 14 years and

7 million pounds in grants and lottery money, the aircraft is back in the air, totally renovated by all the manufacturers needed to complete the restoration. On October 18th 2007, Vulcan XH558 roared to life yet again. Who remembers when it was one of the heroes of the Falklands War? (From Everything2.com: "If it hadn't been for the 1982 Falklands War, the Vulcan would have entered service with the RAF, gone about its business and left without leaving any sort of impression on the general public. As it turned out, bombing the Port Stanley airport could only be done by an aircraft able to fly almost 4000 miles in one go: the Avro Vulcan. In a series of five raids named Black Buck 1 to 5, the RAF managed to punch a few holes in the Port Stanley runway, doing little in the way of physical damage but scaring the hell out of the resident Argentinian force.")

However, in pole position to entertain and thrill spectators at Southport were the internationally renowned Red Arrows, the public face of the RAF. They've been flying in air shows for 45 years, completing over 90 displays and fly-pasts at a wide variety of events. The current team, (Red 1 to Red 9), consists of nine display pilots and Red 10, the Road Manager. Red 10 flies a 10th

Hawk aircraft to display venues just in case one of the other nine becomes unserviceable. These men are all front-line fast jet pilots of Jaguar GR3, Tornado GR4 and Harrier GR9 aircraft. They have all served as front-line pilots around the world, some recently returning from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Reds 1 to 5 form the front section and Reds 6 and 7 are the dynamic manoeuvre

pilots who have the crowd holding their breath in the second half of the show. There's also a Junior Engineering Officer and nine technicians – known as the circus – who fly in the rear seats of the aircraft to display occasions, so that essential servicing can begin before the main support team of 90 further personnel arrive.

Southport provided plenty more too - static aircraft, large life-like remote controlled models and the Black Cats helicopter display team from the Royal Navy (2009 marks the Centenary Year of Naval Aviation).

I hear it's all on again next year. Might find my way back to Southport again!



# WOMEN IN BALLOONING

## by Allie Dunnington



### Getting 'hooked'

My second ever balloon flight was about three months later in Al Ain, UAE. Phil was running an air display in the desert which included 20 balloons and we had some amazing flights over the dunes. Flying at less than ten feet over the sand in the early morning with the different shades of light and dark, the adrenaline of finding somewhere sensible to land, judging the winds and dealing with them, the comradeship you experience with other pilots, and the ad hoc encounters with the local people, enforced my initial feeling that this particular way of flying was just made for me!

### The beginning of the story

Dream or reality? There I am, gently drifting in a hot air balloon over a seemingly endless sea of Burmese pagodas. The air is warm and humid and filled with scents of smoke from cooking fires. The sun is gradually setting as a huge red fireball over the distant mountains, and the silver glittering waters of the majestic river Irrawaddy reflect the shadows of little boats.

Suddenly the dream becomes reality, and with the command: "Landing positions please, stow your cameras away", Jackie, our pilot, lands the balloon in a tiny field near a Burmese settlement. Bump, bump... and a last attempt of the huge sail above us to float further, but then it loses its energy and the balloon comes to rest.

Within minutes we are surrounded by curious locals and excited children. Time to disembark. We are greeted by the smiling Burmese crew and Phil - the pilot who had earlier on invited me on my first ever balloon flight. Just hours ago we had briefly bumped into each other. I was here as a guide of a German tour group but got quite sick with a bad cold and the complete loss of my voice. Despite my nearly absent and croaking voice we managed a conversation, and Phil invited me on this flight (later on we always joked that he only fell in love because he thought I couldn't talk). How could I refuse? With a toast and refreshing sips of champagne we received our flight certificates and were welcomed into the world of 'balloonists'. From that minute my life was changed forever: I ended up marrying Phil and having – no, not five children – but five balloons!



There is no turbulence or vibration to make you feel sick (in a balloon we travel with the wind and not against it); there is always fresh air and enough space to move a bit, and it is excellent for photography since there are no obstructions. Ballooning feels very safe and indeed it is recognized as one of the safest forms of aviation in the world. Nevertheless it has the spirit of adventure and challenge, and demands quick decisions, organizational skills, and a somewhat a strong personality.

Luckily Phil is a very experienced instructor and examiner and has been in ballooning almost since the modern revival of hot air ballooning in the UK, which was around the 1970s. He actually taught the famous wildlife filmmaker Alan Root to fly in Kenya in 1972. He has since flown in 98 countries, being the world record holder of the number of countries flown in by hot air balloon.

### A brief history of ballooning and how it works

Hot air ballooning was originally - so the French proclaim, but the Chinese and even the Latin Americans dispute that fact - invented by the Montgolfier brothers in 1783. Since then balloons have developed technically like any other form of aviation, with various improvements to the system, safety and regulations (these latter unfortunately, with new EASA rules, getting rather out of hand now). Today there is a wide range of balloon manufacturers around the world, but the main player and still the largest balloon company is Cameron Balloons in Bristol, where the development of hot air balloons was started in 1968 by Don Cameron.



The size of a hot air balloon varies between a tiny 'cloudbopper' (basically a one-person balloon or in my case a 'one-woman' Balloon, see pic of G-HEXE

which was actually my wedding gift from Phil), to bigger balloons (like a 90,000cu ft or 105) to the massive passenger 'buses' like 600's which are flown mainly in Egypt or Turkey and can carry up to 31 passengers!

Ballooning doesn't involve a lot of instruments (a GPS and altimeter are usually the only instruments used on a flight), and even though it requires some physical work in lifting and dragging the envelope or the basket, it can all be managed through team work.

### Women in Ballooning

So what about women being balloon pilots?

It is strange that there are actually so few female pilots around. Out of, let's say, one hundred male balloonists you would only find approximately 5-6 women. Every time I attend an international balloon meet and count the numbers, I find that this fact seems to be the case almost wherever you go.

That is surprising, because ballooning is a quite 'female' activity involving a lot of multi-tasking (who else can manage a handful of screaming kids, washing up and being on the telephone with your best friend at the same time?), and also intuition...assessing the winds and getting a feeling to fly with them.

When I asked the wives of other pilots why they didn't want to get more involved than retrieving after their flying husbands, the most common answer was: "I don't want to take the responsibility". Well, of course you will have to take full responsibility for what you do when you are in command, whether it is with your crew, your passengers, your kit, or your landing area.

But...is there a more rewarding feeling then after the successful landing of your first solo flight?

### Training and balloon licences

To get your balloon licence you will need to be over 17 years old, physically fit (a declaration is sufficient for a PPL) and must have at least 16 flying hours, where at least four flights must have been done with an official instructor; the rest can be done with any pilot (this rule will change with EASA). You will have to pass several flight exercises like level flight, steep descent, and landing in winds over 8 kts (that's the speed when landing a balloon, especially in a small field, becomes a real challenge). You will learn to deal with emergencies like burner failure, fire in the air etc. Then you will do a solo flight. We also have to pass five written exams that are similar to the fixed-wing exams, with the difference of 'balloon systems'. The others are navigation, met, air law, and HPL.

The main thing in the beginning of training is to hope for good weather and cracking in as many flights as you can, to develop a feel for the reaction of the balloon. A hot air balloon works on the principle of warming air up by burning propane through the burner coils to lift the balloon, or by letting the air in the envelope cool through doing nothing or pulling the red rip line that will open



the top parachute to release the hot air through the top. A balloon can safely ascend or descend with a rate of 1000 ft per min (depending on size and weight load) giving the pilot and his passengers amazing opportunities to cruise low over corn fields, lakes or forests, and in the next minute to enjoy a panoramic view from 5000 ft.

In ballooning you can't steer your aircraft. The only way to manoeuvre is by using different air streams at different altitudes. In order therefore to 'plan' your flight, your fuel, your landings etc, you constantly have to monitor the winds and try to find the most suitable ones for your plan. It's very common therefore to have plan A, B and Z for your landing site! A lesson learned only this year was that I will never, ever say again: "I am 100% sure that I will land in this field".

### Ballooning around the world...

The most exciting thing in balloon flying is the fact that each flight will be different. You hardly ever land in the exactly same spot as previously, and each flight poses new challenges and unknowns.

In the next issue I would like to share a few of my 'round-the-world' ballooning experiences, taking you to the Gobi Desert of China, the majestic forts of Rajasthan, the borders of Bosnia and Serbia, the communist country of Belarus, the outback of Australia, the tropical island of Fiji, and - as the latest on the my countries list - the 'lost world' of Venezuela.

Note: It would be great to welcome more women into the sport and please feel free to contact me with any questions that you have. I am also hoping to organize the first All-Women Balloon Event in the UK in 2010.

*Dr. Allie Dunnington, born in Germany in 1967 but living in Bristol since 2004, obtained her balloon PPL in 2005 and her CPL in January 2009. She has a degree in Asian Studies and Anthropology and has lived and worked in various countries around the world, including China, Japan, India, Burma and Mongolia. Travelling and sports are her passion, aviation being her most recent interest. She works as a tour manager and consultant, with the prospect of doing more full time work as a balloon pilot.*



# BWPA AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

## The Brabazon Cup

This cup was presented to the BWPA by Lord Brabazon of Tara in 1959. It is awarded for one particular outstanding or noteworthy performance in aviation. This year it was awarded to **Flt Lt Kirsty Moore**, for her selection as the first woman to fly with the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team, the Red Arrows. Although not the first female to apply to join the Red Arrows, Kirsty was the first to make the 'shortlist' of candidates, and the first to be selected for the team. Applications to join the Red Arrows from Royal Air Force fast-jet pilots meeting the relevant criteria are treated equally and considered purely on merit, and Kirsty said that it was only a matter of time before a woman was selected for the team, but was elated that it happened to be her.

## BWPA Special Recognition Award

This new award is in recognition of an individual's active support of women in aviation. This year's winner of the Special Recognition Award was **Jane Middleton**, for many years' work in the aviation industry during which she has used her experience to successfully promote aviation to women. Jane was thwarted in her early ambition to become a commercial pilot, but nevertheless went on to forge a successful career in the aviation industry. She is a member of the Air League, Royal Aeronautical Society, GAPAN, and a Trustee of the Royal Air Force Museum where she is Chair of the Education and Research Committee. She chaired the 2007 Women in Aviation International European Conference hosting nearly 100 delegates from 13 countries across Europe and the USA, and was involved in the establishment of the Southern England Chapter of WAI, which held its inaugural conference last month.

## The Jean Lennox Bird Pendant

This award is made to a British woman pilot who has served aviation over a period of time in any aspect, consistently achieving goals, showing diligence to duties and encouragement to others. The winner of this year's award was **Rita Boniface**, who has been a member of the BWPA since the early 1970's when she was instructing at Southend, and a member of the committee almost continuously since 1977. During her time on the committee she has served variously as Events Organiser, Hon Treasurer and latterly as Chair of the Awards and Scholarships sub-committee. She has been intimately involved with the awarding of the annual BWPA scholarship for many years and has been the Association's contact with the Air League, which administers the scholarship on our behalf, throughout this period. She was awarded the RAeC's Old and Bold trophy in 2005 for her enthusiastic promotion of aviation to all and her encouragement of young people in particular, and for regaining her own licence four years after recovering from serious injuries sustained in a flying accident.

## The O P Jones Gliding Trophy

This cup is awarded to a British woman pilot for an achievement or special contribution to gliding or hang gliding. This year it went to **Ayala Liran**. Ayala started gliding in 2001 when given the opportunity for a trial flight at Lasham. Shortly afterwards she joined the Reading University Soaring Society, going solo in 2002 and gaining her Silver a year later. This year she achieved a noteworthy performance at her first Women's World Gliding Championships, finishing 4th. She is an instructor at Lasham Gliding Club.

## The Hilda Hewlett Trophy

This trophy is presented to a BWPA member between the ages of 16 and 25 who has shown initiative and commitment in gaining her PPL with a view to following a career in aviation. This year's winner, **Helme Harrison**, received the award for the optimal use of three separate scholarships in gaining her PPL, completing the course to a high standard and then subsequently upgrading to piloting a larger aircraft. She began flying at the Wycombe Air Centre, where she was awarded the Sir Adrian Swire flying scholarship. She received a BWPA scholarship earlier this year, and has also been awarded an engineering scholarship by the Air League. Most recently she has been awarded the prestigious GAPAN Flying Scholarship.

## The Naomi Christy Cup

This trophy is awarded for a flying or flying-related personal achievement. It was awarded to **Debbie Tyzack**, for achieving her NPPL despite disabling ill health. Demoralised after being diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis, Debbie found the determination and persistence to overcome pain and other problems and to complete her NPPL training.

## The Chairwoman's Challenge Trophy

This is awarded to the competition entry judged to be the most interesting or unusual navigation flight, on a theme set by the judges. This year's theme was "Places of Worship". The award went to **Janet Chanides**, for a fascinating flight around the great cathedrals of the fens. The route involved a large number of waypoints and precise navigation to find small features in the landscape. Her log book was meticulously researched and beautifully presented, with clearly annotated photographs and charts to illustrate the route.

## The Faith Bennett Navigation Cup

This trophy is awarded to a British woman pilot for a navigation exercise of special merit or which stretches the experience of the pilot to her limits. It went to **Lydia Szkatula**, for her entry in the Chairwoman's Challenge. Her route took her from Goodwood to the Isle of Wight, passing Lewes Castle, Arundel Castle, Carisbrooke Castle Osborne House and Beaulieu House, in addition to other famous stately homes. It was said to be a technically perfect completion of the competition, and was flown solo by a relatively inexperienced pilot.

## The Muriel Sells Trophy

This award is made to a BWPA member who has supported the Association either by regularly attending events or by working in the background to further the association's aims. This year's winner, **Amy Chau**, was nominated for her enthusiastic leadership of the Essex region of the BWPA over a number of years, keeping members up to date with information even if they cannot attend the monthly meetings, and recruiting many new members. She also contributes numerous pictures and articles for the Newsletter.

## BWPA Bursary Winner for 2009

This year the BWPA funded one bursary which was offered to BWPA members only. It went to **Ella Bartczak**, and will be used towards her IMC Rating, not only for the purpose of career development but also in the interests of flight safety.

## BWPA Scholarship Winners for 2009

This year, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Air League, the BWPA funded two scholarships. One went to **Lara Small**, who is studying for a Master of Aerospace Manufacturing Engineering at Bristol University and has just completed a 12-month industrial placement with Rolls-Royce Bristol Defence Aerospace. She hopes to join Rolls-Royce on their Graduate Leadership Development programme after graduation in 2011. With some previous gliding experience behind her, Lara flew her scholarship at the South Warwickshire Flying School at Wellesbourne, going solo after just 7 of the 12 hours flown. The second scholarship was awarded to **Helme Harrison**; see above (The Hilda Hewlitt Trophy) for further details

In addition, the mini scholarship given to Flying Scholarships for the Disabled in memory of Lucy Rodger was awarded to **Sarah Jenkins**, who suffered severe back injuries in 1991 when an aerial descent slide broke. As a result of her progressive back pain since then she has had to give up her main love, horse riding, and it is hoped that the mini scholarship will give a welcome boost to her morale.



# WOMEN AIRFORCE SERVICE PILOTS (WASP) IN WASHINGTON

by Cheryl Sullivan

I recently went with my husband for a trip to Washington DC on the occasion of our wedding anniversary. Whilst there, we visited Arlington Cemetery and also the 'Women In Military Service For America' Memorial located there. To my amazement, there was an exhibition entitled 'Fly Girls of World War II' organised by 'Wings Across America'. It was the story of the WASP – Women Airforce Service Pilots. The Women's Memorial is the first stop on a nation-wide tour of the Fly Girls exhibit, but it will be there until March 2010.

We spent some time viewing it. I was delighted to learn that the idea originated with Jacqueline Cochran, who set more speed and altitude records than any of her contemporaries, male or female. She not only became one of the world's great aviatrixes, but also one of the best pilots of either gender. In June 1941 she delivered a Lend-Lease Lockheed Hudson bomber, becoming the first woman to fly a military aircraft across the Atlantic. Whilst in the UK, she met with 50 women ATA pilots before returning to the US.

Her initial proposals for a women pilot division of the Air Corps Ferrying Command was rejected on the basis of problems with housing and training. Even a further submission in October 1941 merely produced a suggestion that she recruit and oversee American women pilots to fly with the British women pilots. In March 1942, she went to England with 25 fellow women pilots.

American losses of combat pilots became so great that in order to release male pilots from duties within the US, Ms Cochran's proposals were reconsidered and she was ordered to return to the US. On September 15th 1942 her proposed military flying training program was officially approved and commenced operations as the Womens' Flying Training Detachment.

Around 25,000 young women applied for the program during its existence and about 1,830 were accepted. The first class of 29 began training, under the command of Army Air Force officers, at the Municipal Airport in Houston, Texas on November 16th 1942. Their flying clothes were men's used flying suits – smallest size, 44 long! Three months later, the training was moved to Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas.

A total of 1074 trainees took the same oath as all US military officers, completed seven months of military flight training, graduated, and together with 28 civilian women pilots of the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron, were eventually named 'WASP, Women Airforce Service Pilots' by General Arnold in August 1943. These WASP were the first women in history to fly America's military aircraft. The WASP were stationed at 120 Army Air Bases all over America. They flew more than 60 million miles for their country in every type of aircraft and on every type of mission except combat. Assignments were expanded throughout their period of operations to include towing targets for air-to-air gunnery practice and ground-to-air anti-aircraft practice, engineering test pilots, ferrying, instrument instructors, transporting personnel and cargo, simulated strafing, training navigators and bombardiers, smoke laying, night tracking missions, slow timing engines, and flying the B-26 Martin Marauder and the B- 29 Super Fortress to prove that they were safe. They even tested

top secret radio controlled drones designed to mislead enemy radar, and were amongst the first to fly prototype jets.

A total of 38 WASP, in both training and operational incidents, lost their lives while serving their country. They were treated differently from the male pilots who were killed in similar accidents — some in the same accidents. The WASP bodies were sent home in cheap pine boxes, they were buried at the expense of their families or classmates, there were no gold stars allowed in their parents' windows, and there was no American flag allowed to cover their coffins.

On 7th December 1944, in a speech to the last graduating class, General Arnold said: "You and more than 900 of your sisters have shown that you can fly wingtip to wingtip with your brothers. I salute you. We of the Army Air Force are proud of you. We will never forget our debt to you." Thirteen days later, with victory almost certain, the WASP were quietly and unceremoniously disbanded and planned future classes told not to report. There were no benefits and no honours; they simply hung up their parachutes and paid their own way back home. Their military records were sealed, stamped 'classified' and filed away in the government archives, where they remained, unopened, for 33 years. Despite General Arnold's pledge that the Army Air Force would never forget them, it did - and so did America. Years of lobbying by General Arnold's son, Col. Bruce Arnold, Senator Barry Goldberg, and others finally bore fruit in 1977. The only bill that has ever been sponsored by every woman member of Congress finally passed. It gave the WASP the veteran status they had earned and recognised, that the time as a WASP constituted 'active military service'. Although the bill was signed into law on 23rd November 1977 by Jimmy Carter, no WASP representative was invited to be present.

Seven years later, their medals came in the mail. They waited until 2001 to be granted burial rights in Arlington National Cemetery. Even then, the entitlement was only as 'enlisted' not as officers. The WASP history is still not included in most textbooks and is still virtually unknown to most Americans.

Jacqueline Cochran was present at the Japanese surrender to General MacArthur and in 1953 became the first woman to break the sound barrier. When she, along with 12 other women pilots, applied in the late 1950's to join the US Space Flight programme, the same prejudiced attitudes precluded their involvement.

WINGS ACROSS AMERICA is a non-profit project whose mission is to educate, motivate and inspire this generation, and generations to come, with the history of the WASP.

Further information may be found on their website: <http://www.wingsacrossamerica.org> and in particular <http://www.wingsacrossamerica.us/wasp/fifi.htm>, which gives details of the involvement of Walt Disney!



HaHa HaHaHa  
Hee hee

# THE HUMOUR PAGE

HaHa HaHaHa  
Hee hee

From Lydia Szkatula:

After every flight, Qantas pilots fill out a form, called a 'gripe sheet', which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft.

The mechanics correct the problems, document their repairs on the form, and then pilots review the gripe sheets before the next flight. These are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by Qantas pilots (marked P) and the solutions recorded (marked with an S) by maintenance engineers.



## Mechanic vs. Pilot

P: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement.

S: Almost replaced left inside main tire.

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.

S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

P: Something loose in cockpit.

S: Something tightened in cockpit.

P: Dead bugs on windshield.

S: Live bugs on back-order.

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent.

S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.

S: Evidence removed.

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.

S: DME volume set to more believable level.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.

S: That's what friction locks are for.

P: IFF inoperative in OFF mode.

S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.

S: Suspect you're right..

P: Number 3 engine missing.

S: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

P: Aircraft handles funny.

S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious.

P: Target radar hums.

S: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics.

P: Mouse in cockpit.

S: Cat installed.

And the best one for last.....

P: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.

S: Took hammer away from midget.

# FROM DAWN TIL DUSK (AGAIN)

By Amanda Harrison

(Amanda Harrison and flying partner Steve Bridgewater make another attempt at the Dawn to Dusk contest.)

Last summer Steve and I decided to enter the Dawn to Dusk flying contest again. This would be my second attempt and Steve's third – and we knew exactly what



our 2009 theme would be. October 2009 marked the 100th anniversary of Britain's first air show, and it just so happened that Steve was already writing a book to mark the anniversary. Steve has been involved in the air show world most of his life, and my dad took me to air displays as a small child, helping foster my lifelong love of aviation.

The rules of the flying contest call for competitors to pick a theme and then do the flying, in accordance with that theme, between 04.30 and 21.30 on a single day. We therefore chose to visit or overfly as many current or former air show venues as possible – and we would use the flight to publicise the great work done by Mandy Pantall's 'Fly2Help' charity. We were lucky to secure the support and sponsorship of 'TakeFlight Aviation' at Wellesbourne Mountford, who kindly provided one of their PA-28s for the flight.

A long and convoluted planning process was not helped by the fact that I live in Oxford and Steve now lives in Nottingham – meaning we rarely get the chance to sit down and study the same map! Nevertheless we narrowed the list down to 30 airfields and set about developing the most efficient route around them. All landings would be 'touch and goes' unless we required fuel or were scheduled to meet the press to promote the charity. We also factored in 10 minutes on every leg to cover the approach, landing (or touch-and-go), take-off and climb out. Where refuelling or press conference stops were scheduled we allowed ourselves 30 minutes on the ground. Official dawn on our chosen date (August 14th) was 05.37, but CAA rules meant we could depart 30 minutes prior to that time. Dusk was 20.32 – meaning we'd need to be on the ground no later than 21.02.

August 14, 2009 – 4.15am. We were at Wellesbourne Mountford and checked in with our operations team. John Baker had positioned himself at the Flightworx offices at Earls Colne and was joined by Adrian Kinsley. Guy Stockley was on detachment to Afghanistan but determined to be part of the adventure and monitored the internet for the latest Met and NOTAMs – this was a truly international effort! There wasn't a breath of wind at Wellesbourne Mountford as we clambered into our lifejackets (is there a more undignified article of clothing known to mankind?). G-BYSP's engine fired into life at 05.06 and we were airborne at 05.15.

It was still dark as we headed 307° under the control of Birmingham Approach. Our first stop was Halfpenny Green, where we'd been granted 'out of hours' indemnity to do a touch and go. We climbed away at 05.36 en route to the

Isle of Man. At 05.41 we overflew RAF Cosford (another airshow venue) and snapped a photo for the judges. Routing up the Low Level Corridor towards Blackpool, we passed the small town of



Winsford at 06.01 and routed directly overhead my old school! We then passed Warton and turned overhead Blackpool, and coasted out over the Irish Sea towards the Isle of Man.

Mid way across the water the clouds finally began to lift and we were able to climb slightly and breathe a sigh of relief. We never made it to more than 2,000ft but every extra foot counted and carried us further from the waves. Our routing across the sea had been very specific as we had wanted to recreate the route flown by the Manx Air Derby in the 1930s. Aircraft raced from the south of England, turning overhead Blackpool and coasting in at Maughold Lighthouse (as per our route).

Upon landing at Ronaldsway at 07.06 we were greeted by TV cameras and officials in hi-viz jackets. The first to greet us was a representative of 'Special Branch' and we immediately expected to be quizzed about our flight plan, customs forms and passport details – however this was far from the truth – this policeman was an aviation enthusiast who wanted to be the first to welcome us to his island!



The next 15 minutes were a blur of interviews and posing, with the BBC Isle of Man TV taking up the bulk of our time. Whilst G-BYSP was fuelled we were whisked off in a police car (with

blue lights and sirens!) to the nearest bathrooms for a comfort break. I enjoyed my few minutes on the island, and intend to return to sample the wonderful hospitality again. We accelerated down the runway at exactly 08.00 and pulled up into a gentle climb whilst rocking the wings to wave goodbye to the TV crew. From here on our route took us eastwards to perform a touch

and go at Blackpool (08.31) and onwards to Doncaster – where we landed 11 minutes ahead of schedule at 09.14. More TV crews and press were waiting for us at Doncaster, and Steve jumped at the opportunity to show a pretty young reporter around the aeroplane. We left Doncaster at 10.03 and headed for Derby (10.30) and then Stoke Golding. “If I had guns you’d be dead now,” called Stoke Golding’s owner, Tim Jinks, as he manoeuvred his Christen Eagle onto our tail. Tim escorted us into the lovely grass airfield, his pretty biplane bobbing around us taking photos and videos. We did a touch and go at 11.00 and headed off for a fuel stop at Coventry.

The rest of the day was a blur of airfields. From Coventry we routed to Sywell, Old Warden, Little Gransden and even RAF Mildenhall, where the USAF had worked hard to get us Pentagon approval to land! From there we headed to Cambridge and Duxford – where we gave an eight year old airshow fan her first flight in a light aeroplane. Leaving Duxford at 13.57 we headed to North Weald, Damyns Hall, Biggin Hill and Farnborough, before setting course for Newquay St Mawgan. This would be our longest leg and it was also in ever worsening weather. En route we passed the airshow/fly-in venues at Middle Wallop, Popham and Compton Abbas, but by the time we reached Devon the cloud was becoming thicker and lower. We opted to cancel our planned overflight at Branscombe and climbed up through the cloud into VMC as we passed Sidmouth, finally breaking clear of cloud as we reached 3,300ft.

An ILS approach into Newquay was the only option and we popped out of the cloud at 800ft, both breathing a sigh of relief. We landed at 17.00 – 10mins early – but as we looked at the en-route weather it appeared that



our stay might be a long one. Outside the office window we could see wispy grey clouds swirling below a solid bank of cloud. The bright warm sun we had left at Duxford was nowhere to be seen, and the breeze blowing through the window was decidedly chilly. What a difference three hours and 250 miles makes to the British climate.

Another press conference followed and ‘SP was refuelled for the final time. We finally left at 18.05 and immediately entered cloud as we turned north. The cloud finally cleared as we climbed through 3,800ft and we contacted Cardiff Radar and pressed on north.

Descending through 1,200ft the cloud began to break and I caught my first glimpse of the Severn Estuary, its water looking cold and menacing with small white crests on the choppy waves. Below the clouds it was dark and grey but ahead of us I could just make out the unmistakable shape of the Severn Bridge. It was 19.05. We continued to Kemble and landed at 19.20 to be

greeted by yet more press. From here our next stop was due to be RAF Fairford, where the USAF had agreed to man the tower especially for us to do a low approach at 20.20. However, as we orbited South Cerney (another air show venue) we could not raise Fairford on the radio. I contacted Brize who called Fairford by telephone and cleared us to make our approach. Our next point-of-call was Little Rissington...but the friendly controller at Brize asked if we’d like to add his airfield to our list. Who were we to refuse! It was now getting dark, but we had enough light to make our final touch and go at Little Rissington at 20.35, before climbing away and turning north towards Wellesbourne. We had been due to overfly Upper Heyford, but it was now dark and raining so we decided to head home instead. We did ‘bag’ a final over-flight (Gaydon at 20.45) en route but were relieved to be back on the ground at Wellesbourne at 20.50.



There was then a champagne reception at TakeFlight HQ followed by a photo shoot. We contemplated forty winks, but the TakeFlight team were having none of it... they whisked us off to the pub for food and celebrations until 02.00 the next morning...

During the course of the day we had flown 1,126 miles (978nm) in 10hrs 35mins. Our total time, chock to chock, was 12hrs 20mins, and we visited 21 current or former air show venues and overflew/photographed a further nine. We’ll find out how well we’ve done at the awards ceremony on January 20th...

### The Route

Wellesbourne, Halfpenny Green, Cosford (Overflight), Warton (Overflight), Isle of Man, Blackpool, Doncaster, Derby, Stoke Golding, Coventry, Sywell, Old Warden, Little Gransden, RAF Mildenhall, Cambridge, Duxford, North Weald, Damyns Hall, Biggin Hill, Farnborough, Popham (Overflight), Middle Wallop (Overflight), Compton Abbas, Overflight), Branscombe (Cancelled), Newquay, Kemble, South Cerney (Overflight), Fairford (Low approach), Brize Norton (Low approach), Little Rissington, Upper Heyford (Cancelled), Gaydon (Overflight), Wellesbourne



# BWPA – ASPIRATION AND OPPORTUNITY

by Caroline Gough-Cooper



Back in November, the night before Flt Lt Kirsty Moore was officially announced as the first female member of the Red Arrows, I took a phone call just before 10pm. It was BBC Wales wanting to know if I would take part in their breakfast radio show at 7.50 the following morning, in my capacity as Chairman of the BWPA, to talk about Kirsty's appointment! An hour later I had my crib sheet ready, together with directions to the BBC Manchester studios, and all set for a very early departure.

The next morning, well before sunrise, I was sitting in a cosy radio studio drinking tea and listening in to the Breakfast Show waiting for my turn. A few words through my headphones from the show's producer, and I was live, together with the female presenter and Myles Garland, current leader of the Blades aerobatic display team and former member of the Red Arrows.

Myles told the audience a bit about day-to-day life as a member of the team then I was asked why it had taken so long for a woman to make the team. I was ready with the facts, mainly about how it was only in recent times that women had been able to meet all the criteria laid down: flying skills assessed as above average throughout their time in the RAF; 1,500 hours total flight time; and at least one front-line tour of duty. The front-line tour of duty has been the last hurdle to be cleared but, as I pointed out, women have only been allowed to fly in the RAF since 1989 and in fast jets only since 1992.

This brought a howl of protest from the presenter, and I found myself being interrogated as to why it had taken so long for the military to allow women to fly in the forces. Didn't they know there had been equal opportunities employment legislation since the 1960's? You try explaining historical military recruitment policy to an indignant non-flyer at 7.55 in the morning!

So I never got the chance to talk about the BWPA and how we offer support and encouragement to women pilots, or how Kirsty had been awarded one of our scholarships when she was a cadet and what a wonderful role model she will be for young women in the future.

Never mind. The achievement is there for all to see and gives us a wonderful example as we promote our aims. 'Aspiration and Opportunity' – what better words to sum up what we stand for as we enter a new decade!

(The BBC's Contributor Fee and travelling expenses paid for participating in the above radio interview (£47) have been donated to Flying Scholarships for the Disabled on behalf of the BWPA)



## R/T Training Day



The R/T training day at Cranfield was well attended, especially in view of the gale force winds and driving rain which accompanied it. Andy McKnight from NATS Operations and Safety Unit gave a very in-

formative and entertaining talk, with particular reference to the new ATSOCA procedures, clarifying any confusion regarding which level of service should be used. An ATCO himself based at Farnborough, he also explained the new London LARS service and persuaded us all of the benefits of using the service. His speech was rounded off with information concerning the increasing impingements into controlled airspace, before opening up the floor for questions.

After a delicious lunch in good company, we re-convened and Caroline Gough-Cooper gave a presentation on the new UK Phraseology for GA pilots as contained in CAP 413 Supplement 3. This was very informative, but best of all, it was opened up into a discussion of individual experience, in a relaxed but professional environment. All in all, an excellent training day. Roll on the next one.

Caroline Hysom

It was lovely to have the opportunity to go over stuff that I felt I should know but have been too embarrassed to ask about. Sometimes our boundaries become narrower because we are worried to talk on the radio. We don't even realise that they are; we just make excuses to ourselves as to why we are flying round controlled zones instead of asking permission to go through them, and other things like that. The way Caroline delivered the course was very professional but easy to understand and follow, and I felt very comfortable to ask any questions. It was also really nice to meet other members of the BWPA, as I am not always able to attend events. So thank you very much, and I look forward to the next training course!

Nicky Thomas

The talk from NATS gave us a better understanding of the infringement problem around the South East England area. It demonstrated how Farnborough Radar has helped to reduce incidents by keeping an eye out for us and helping us. There was an interesting discussion about Mandatory Transponder Zone versus Mandatory Radio Zone.

Caroline's course certainly helped to refresh our minds about the basic purpose of R/T. Some tips about read-back and the new listening squawks were useful things to jot down. The open discussion helped to sort out some of the myths which may have been lingering in our minds. Sharing experience and discussing it is the best way to learn; there are always some missing gaps to fill in. Thanks, Caroline, for the really useful session.

Amy Chau

## Christmas Lunch

This is the event we all look forward to and is the most well attended event on the BWPA calendar. This year saw us gather at Whittlebury Hall, a modern conference and management centre, hotel and spa, and golf and country club. Quite a large venue as you can imagine! Over 70 people attended and it was nice to see a growing number of husbands and male partners

# BWPA EVENTS

among the guests. Lunch was delicious and efficiently served, and turned into quite a loud affair as the tables had been laid out with plenty of crackers, streamers, party poppers and balloons – the sort that make quite a racket when you let them go! Just the thing to relax everyone and get them chatting.

Caroline Gough-Cooper introduced Martin Robinson, chief executive of AOPA, as the guest speaker, and he gave an interesting account of the work that AOPA has done for the GA community and outlined the work that needs to be done for the future. Caroline then outlined a joint venture between AOPA and the BWPA - the AOPA Wings Award Scheme - an initiative to encourage the development of PPL holders through extra training, air touring, workshops and seminars. Details are to be announced in 2010.



Martin kindly presented the awards, the highlight of the lunch. One that is worthy of note here is the presentation of the Brabazon Cup to Flight Lieutenant Kirsty Moore, the first female member of the Red Arrows display team. Many congratulations to Kirsty.

The raffle neatly rounded off the afternoon, and as people started to say their goodbyes and depart, I reflected on how the annual lunch serves not only to reflect on the past year but also to look forward to the new year. We all hope that 2010 proves to be a great year for flying.

Stephanie Wall

Whittlebury Hall proved a great venue for this year's Christmas Lunch and Awards presentations. It was lovely to have so much space to ourselves for people to mingle and for the sales stall, trophies etc to all be displayed without causing the usual traffic jams.

The meal itself was very good too, though the sampling of the rather strange looking (and tasting) Christmas pudding parfait on our table was more a source of entertainment than a culinary treat.

Martin Robinson spoke briefly about the history of AOPA and the great work it does for GA, and then kindly presented our awards for 2009. All the awards were well deserved as ever, but I must just single out one in particular. Rita Boniface had no idea she was to receive the Jean Lennox Bird Pendant for her many years of service to the BWPA, and watching her face as it slowly dawned on her that the citation Caroline was reading out was actually about her was the highlight of the day for me!

Certificates were also presented to the winners of our scholarships and bursary for 2009. If you wonder whether these scholarships serve their purpose of encouraging young women into aviation, then just remember that the 1995 winner of our scholarship, Kirsty Moore, went on to a flying career in the RAF, and this year became the first woman to be selected for the Red Arrows, for which she was awarded (in her absence) the Brabazon Trophy.

And finally, will somebody please explain how the Essex regional group walked off with half the raffle prizes yet again! Tricia Nelmes

# NEWS

## CONGRATULATIONS TO....

SUE ROSE, who got her night rating in December. All our award winners, see page 14 for details

## NEW MEMBERS

The following members have joined the BWPA since the last newsletter. We extend a warm welcome to:-

Ann Smith – Ascot, Berks  
Allie Dunnington – Bristol  
Rae-Wen Chang – Dubai, UAE  
Haimini Vora – Wickford, Essex  
Asieh Ahmadzade – Barnet, London  
Susan Royse – Sutton, Surrey

## AMY JOHNSON MEMORIAL TRUST SCHOLARSHIP 2010

This award, worth up to £2000, will be offered again this year...last year's was cancelled. For details and an application form contact Mrs M. E. Tucker, 12 Church Lane, Merton Park, London SW19 3PD. Please enclose a stamped, addressed envelope C5 size. The closing date for applications is 28th February 2010, with interviews anticipated in early May.

## NEW GROUP TO TACKLE SHORTAGE OF WOMEN IN AVIATION AND AEROSPACE

The paucity of women in critical jobs in aviation and aerospace such as pilot, engineer and senior management/director has led to the establishment by the Royal Aeronautical Society of the 'Women in Aviation and Aerospace Committee' with the main remit to encourage more women into the industry. The new group is the first to be set up in the UK representing women working in all sectors of the industry. It was officially launched on October 16th 2009 at the RAeS Women in Aviation and Aerospace Conference. The new committee is being chaired by Clare Walker, former BWPA Chairman and Newsletter Editor.

## NINETY-NINES AT 'AMELIA' PRESS CONFERENCE

On October 16th 2009 members of the '99s' attended a press conference to promote 'Amelia', the new feature

film about Amelia Earhart, who was the first president of the 99s, who are an international organisation of women pilots. For more information and to watch the movie trailer, visit [www.foxsearchlight.com/amelia](http://www.foxsearchlight.com/amelia)

For more information on *The Ninety-Nines*, visit <http://www.ninety-nines.org>, <http://www.ameliaearhartmuseum.org>.

You can also contact Lisa Cotham, [PR@ninety-nines.org](mailto:PR@ninety-nines.org).

## NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN IN AVIATION

The NZ Association of Women in Aviation is holding its 50th Anniversary Rally this year, from 4-7th June, at Tauranga Airport. Tauranga, in the beautiful Bay of Plenty, is a wonderful venue for this special occasion, being one of the country's top holiday destinations for Kiwis and visitors. It offers a great mix of scenic attractions, culture, outdoor pursuits and dining experiences. Opportunities abound for pre and post-rally tours and sight-seeing. A full programme of events has been arranged, and all past and present members and supporters are invited. You can register your interest in attending by contacting Association Secretary Michelle Fortune at [contactus@nzawa.org.nz](mailto:contactus@nzawa.org.nz)

## PROPOSED BALLOONING TRIP IN MONGOLIA

New member and balloon pilot Allie Dunnington writes: "Join me in this absolutely unique journey through one of the most beautiful countries in Asia! We'll explore the varied countryside around the Altai Mountains, the sands and gorges of the Gobi desert, the historic ruins of



Karakorum and the buzzing atmosphere in the capital city Ulan Bator. Ballooning will be in three different locations but there will also be a chance to enjoy the vast countryside on horseback, camel or foot. We will form teams for the balloon flights and everybody is welcome with or without ballooning experience!

Date: 18.8.10 - 1.9.10, with the option of traveling from Beijing by train to Ulan Bator two days prior to the tour. Costs: £3,210 per person based on the actual dollar exchange rate. This includes the balloon flights, accommodation, all meals, transport, entry fees, retrieve vehicles.

Contact for further info:

Allie Dunnington: [Almut.nonnenmann@web.de](mailto:Almut.nonnenmann@web.de)  
or 07776 202731

See also: <http://www.panoramicjourneys.com/itinerary.php?codenum=CL15>

## **‘TECHNICAL EVENT FOR WOMEN’**

We recently received the following email: “We would like to invite you to our Technical Event for Women, to be held 22-23rd May 2010 at Pécs - Pogány Airport, Hungary. In this event sporting women (women aerobatics, women car and women biker) will make a show. Melissa Pemperton U.S.A [www.sportsgal.com](http://www.sportsgal.com) and Yvonne Mecialis U.S.A [www.yvonedesings.com](http://www.yvonedesings.com) are helping to organize this event.

(Germany, Italy, Switzerland, U.S.A, Japan)

AIRSPORTS.TV – London, Zoe Adjonyoh

Partners: [www.motoros-szivek.hu](http://www.motoros-szivek.hu),

[www.dragracing.hu](http://www.dragracing.hu)

Sinkó Attila & Nikolette Czingula

- [www.ccs.hu](http://www.ccs.hu)

Cargo Community System”

(If anyone knows anything more, please let me know  
...Editor)

## **MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT FOR OLDER MEMBERS**

Just a reminder that if you are over 80 years old, you are entitled to a reduced rate for your BWPA membership. However, this will not happen automatically; you will need to contact the Membership Secretary and let her know - [membership@bwpa.co.uk](mailto:membership@bwpa.co.uk)

## **DISCOUNT ON FLYER MAGAZINE FOR BWPA MEMBERS, PLUS FREE MAGAZINES FOR NEW PPL HOLDERS.**

Seager Publishing, publishers of FLYER magazine, are offering all members of the BWPA 25% discount on an annual subscription. This means that members would be eligible to pay just £22.45 for 1 year or £44.00 for 2 years; that’s about a 50% saving on the news stand price.

To take advantage of this offer all you need to do is call Charlotte Davies on 01225 481440 and mention that you are a member of the BWPA.

Also, all newly qualified PPLs are entitled to 3 FREE issues of FLYER, see <http://www.flyer.co.uk/ppl.php> for details.

## **FROM THE EDITOR**

Desperately needed! Action photos for the front and back covers of the newsletter...and maybe even inside too. Our cover photos are what everyone sees first, and it’s nice if they know that our members actually fly! If you have any photos taken in an aircraft, please send them, with a short note explaining when and where the picture was taken. Email to [helen@krasner.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:helen@krasner.wanadoo.co.uk).

## **BWPA EMAIL ADDRESSES**

As well as our official email address, [info@bwpa.co.uk](mailto:info@bwpa.co.uk), we have expanded the range of our email addresses to include the following:-

[careers@bwpa.co.uk](mailto:careers@bwpa.co.uk)

[membership@bwpa.co.uk](mailto:membership@bwpa.co.uk)

[awards@bwpa.co.uk](mailto:awards@bwpa.co.uk)

[regions@bwpa.co.uk](mailto:regions@bwpa.co.uk)

[newsletter@bwpa.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@bwpa.co.uk)

[pr.publicity@bwpa.co.uk](mailto:pr.publicity@bwpa.co.uk)

If you send emails to any of these addresses, they will be automatically forwarded directly to the appropriate person.

## **LIST OF BWPA MEMBERS**

A reminder that a list of names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses is available and can be emailed to you by contacting the editor - contact details on page 2. You can have the list arranged alphabetically or by country or both.

## **FINALLY...**

Please let me know of ANY news items, about yourself, another BWPA member, the organisation, or of aviation interest in general. Photos are also extremely welcome. Email everything to [helen@krasner.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:helen@krasner.wanadoo.co.uk), or write to the address on page 2 ...Editor

# BWPA EVENTS 2010

March.	Sat 13th Sat 27th	Indoor Skydiving Chipmunk Club Seminar (NOTE: details and tickets from <a href="http://www.chipfest.co.uk">www.chipfest.co.uk</a> )	Milton Keynes Cambridge Airport
April.	w/c Mon 19th (tbc)	Concorde Simulator	Brooklands
May.	Sat 8th Sat 15th Sat/Sun 22-23rd	RIN TopNav North RIN TopNav South RIN Fly/Sail Rally	Sherburn-in-Elmet White Waltham Lee on Solent
June.	date tbc Fri 11th-Sun 13th	Army Air Corps Fly-In Swiss Fly-Out and FEWP weekend	Middle Wallop Bex, Switzerland
July.	Sun 11th	Fly-in and museum visit	RAF Cosford
Sept.	Fri 3rd-Sun 5th Midweek, date tbc	LAA Rally Visit	Sywell RAF Northolt
Oc.t	Sat/Sun 9th-10th Sun 10th	Ballooning weekend and AGM	Venue tbc
Nov	Date tbc	Wings Scheme Training Day	Cranfield
Dec	Sun 5th	Christmas Lunch and Awards	Venue tbc

REMEMBER, THE DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE SPRING NEWSLETTER IS 31ST MARCH ...but please send contributions earlier if possible.



*A group of chipmunks flying during 'Chipfest 2009' – see page 6*