



# Woking and District Aircrew Association [www.aircrew.org.uk/woking](http://www.aircrew.org.uk/woking) Newsletter

29 May 2021

## Editorial

Uncertainty about COVID restrictions sadly continues to make forward planning rather uncertain.

As previously mentioned, our regular monthly Tuesday activity means that some members are unable to attend due to clashing commitments. A change of lunch day will get round this problem.

There is a good chance that we will be able to recover more normal freedoms in the near future, so now is a good time to start looking at specific proposals.

### Tuesday 15 June

Zoom meeting at 2pm to reflect on COVID changes the previous day. Details closer to the time.

### Wednesday 16 June

Indoor lunch at 1215 at the Half Moon, Windlesham (01276 473329) to avoid the rush which could follow the lifting of restrictions the following week. Members are invited to book their own tables as individuals, couples or by making up tables of up to 6 as you wish. That way we respect COVID restrictions for larger groups.

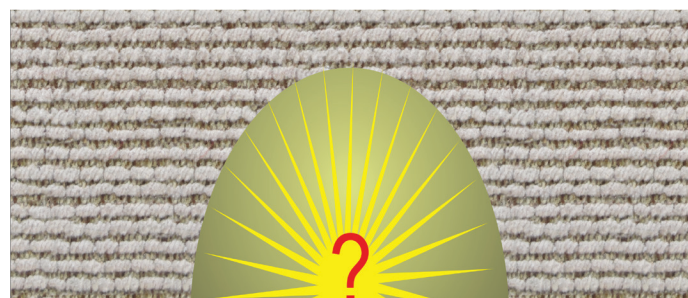
### When restrictions allow

Dates for the following events will depend on government COVID policy after 21 June.

Informal lunch in the upstairs room at the White Hart, Chobham.

Group visit to the FAST Museum at Farnborough

Group visit to the Semet Aviation at Fair Oaks with an opportunity to fly one of their simulators.



A light at the end of the tunnel at last?

## The Arrows are Back

Audiences across the UK can once again enjoy the spectacular displays of the Red Arrows the first time in almost two years.



They last performed in July 2019, at the Royal International Air Tattoo, but the Pandemic forced event organisers to cancel displays. However, now led by Squadron Leader Boulton, the Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team were given Public Display Authority (PDA) to return to the skies for their 57th season.

During the Pandemic the Red Arrows kept extremely busy with several major flypasts – including marking the 75th anniversaries of VE and VJ Day – and a vast online outreach programme that explored themes around leadership, teamwork, and science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects.

The new aerobatic show will begin on June 4 at the Midlands Air Festival, followed by a four-month summer campaign spanning the UK and mainland Europe. The first show will last 20 minutes and display some of the most impressive formations including Swan and the Big Vixen Roll. There will also be several new moves, such as the Boomerang, and even an all-blue-smoke trail as a respectful dedication to the NHS and key workers.

Source: <https://www.raf.mod.uk/news/articles/red-arrows-return-to-uk-airshows/>

# The Future Royal Air Force

The headlines that greeted the recently published Defence Command Paper entitled Defence in a Competitive Age, highlighted the reduction in Army personnel numbers. But the DCP covered a great deal more and included its vision of the RAF in 2030.

The planned expenditure on defence of £188bn in the next four years represents an increase of 14% over that period. Despite this there will be a significant reduction in the RAF's manned aircraft numbers as the following list shows.

## Lockheed Martin F-35B Lightning II

The original number of 138 aircraft to be acquired was never likely to become a reality. A total of 48 have now been delivered or are on order and there is a vague hint of a small increase in the future. More UK weapons will be integrated into the F-35B force.

## Eurofighter Typhoon

It is planned to retire 24 older aircraft by 2025, but there is a commitment to retain seven Typhoon squadrons. New armament such as the UK-developed Spear Cap3 precision air-launched weapon will enhance the Typhoons' capability.

## BAe Hawk T1

These aircraft, operated by No 100 Squadron at RAF Leeming, will be retired by 2025.

## Lockheed C-130J Hercules

Fourteen older Hercules will be taken out of service by 2023 as the Airbus A400M Atlas achieves increased capability.

## Boeing E-3D Sentry AEW1

The seven airborne early warning and control aircraft of Nos 8 and 23 Squadrons at RAF Waddington will be withdrawn this year.

## Boeing E-7A Wedgetail AEW1

Three aircraft, not five as previously announced, whose airframe origins were described in the February Newsletter, will take over the role of the E-3D Sentry becoming operational in 2023.

## Boeing CH-47 Chinook

An unspecified number of the oldest Chinook helicopters, based at Odiham and Benson, will be retired. Some newer variants, now under development, may be acquired later in the decade.

## Overheard Somewhere

*Following the publication of the 2021 Defence Command Paper, here is the Message Left on the British Army Answerphone*

Thank you for calling the British Army. I'm sorry, but all our units are out at the moment or are otherwise engaged. Please leave a message with your country, name of organisation, the region, the specific crisis and a number we can call you.

As soon as we have sorted out Kosova, Bosnia, Serbia, Iraq, Northern Ireland, Sierra Leone, Congo, marching up and down bits of tarmac in London and compulsory health and safety at work training, we will return your call.

Please speak after the tone or, if you require more options, listen to the following numbers:

If your crisis is small and close to the sea, press 1 for the Royal Marines.

If your concern is distant, with a tropical climate, good hotels and can be solved by one or two low-risk bombing runs, please press 2 for the Royal Air Force. (Please note that this service is not available after 1630 or at weekends.)

If your enquiry concerns a situation which can be resolved by a warship, some flags or bunting, a damn good cocktail party and a first class marching band, please write well in advance to the First Sea Lord, Royal Navy, Whitehall, London SW1.

Finally: Remember that when one engine fails on a twin-engined aircraft, you always have enough power to get you to the scene of the crash.

## A Good Watch

### Hoot Gibson

fighter pilot, test pilot, astronaut and air racer shares his experiences at Pensacola Seniors.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=8oaRnFrKHU8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8oaRnFrKHU8)

### Aviation History Online

[www.aviation-history.com/video.html](http://www.aviation-history.com/video.html)

## Michael Jones

With great sadness we record the passing of Michael Jones, Fair Oaks airport historian and leading light in the campaign against losing the airfield to housing. He often was present when the branch lunched at the White Hart and once joined us on Zoom from his hospital bed. Our thoughts are with his family and friends.

# EARLY HISTORY OF FAIROAKS AND AIR RACES

At their July 2001 meeting, members of the Woking Branch of the Aircrew Association enjoyed a riveting talk from Ron Paine, now an erect and sprightly octogenarian, who first flew from an airstrip on a farm near Chobham (which subsequently became Fairoaks Airport) and went on to win a record number of Air Races in the years after World War 2.

The farm was owned by Lt Col Louis Arbon Strange DSO MC DFC (one-time CFI of the RAF Central Flying School at Upavon), who was then the Managing Director of the Spartan Aircraft Company, who frequently flew from his farm to their factory on the Isle of Wight, often taking Ron Paine with him. Ron Paine's family lived next to Sir Sydney Camm, the designer of the Hurricane. After his father's premature death, Sydney Camm took him under his wing, not only making sure that he was apprenticed to Barnes Wallis as an aircraft engineer, but also getting him pilot training.

Air Racing started in 1922, principally as a means of promoting new aircraft and public awareness of flying as a serious means of transport.

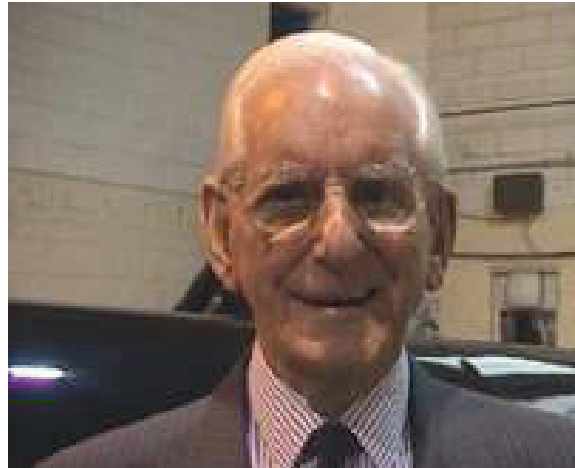
The King's Cup Air Race all round Britain started in 1922, and did much to prove the reliability of the aircraft developed between then and 1927, when Pylon Racing started at Brookwood, following American practices. Up until 1932, all the aircraft taking part were biplanes. 1934 saw the England to Australia Race, whilst the annual King's Cup event, restricted to aircraft of all British construction, brought the low wing monoplane into being. Miles Hawks were prominent up until the 2-day racing at Hatfield in 1938, which was the last event before the war interrupted racing until 1947.

As new airfields opened after the war, mostly with grass surfaces, airport authorities, starting with Birmingham Elmdon Airport, and followed by Newcastle, Leeds/Bradford and Coventry, asked the Royal Aero Club of the United Kingdom to launch National Air Races to promote flying.

Ron Paine came second at Birmingham in 1947, and third in the King's Cup in 1948 in a Miles Hawk Speed 6, and earned enough money in generous sponsorship from petrol companies to buy the aeroplane!

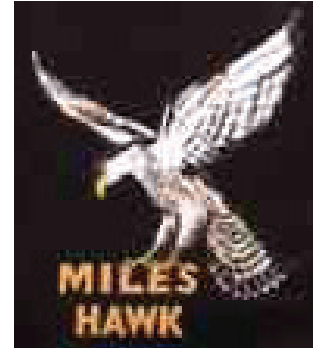
After this he went on with it to come second out of 85 aeroplanes participating in the Daily Express Air Race from Bournemouth to Dover, and to win the SBAC trophy for the King's Cup Air Race 6 times, at a maximum speed of 196 Knots, allowing him to keep the trophy in perpetuity!

This same vintage aircraft, built in 1935, has been bought in 1999 and fully restored to mint condition by a retired Concorde Pilot, Roger Mills, who fell in



Ron Paine in front of G-ADGP, the Miles Hawk Speed Six racer in which he won the King's Cup Air Race six times, at a maximum speed of 196 knots.

love with it as a 5-year old, when Ron Paine was racing it. Roger keeps it at Fairoaks and, after the meeting, invited ACA members into the hangar for a detailed look.



Miles Hawk insignia on the fuselage of G-ADGP



After the talk, members of the Woking Branch ACA were able to inspect Ron Paine's original Hawk Speed Six, which is now owned by a retired Concorde pilot and kept at Fairoaks.



Ron Paine (left), current owner Roger Mills (next left) and his maintenance crew (Alec Dunbar of Woking ACA and Philip Flack) with their pride and joy.

*G-ADGP is currently registered to Shuttleworth.*