

# Editorial

**T**HE IMPORTANT DATE THIS YEAR is 22 April, our AGM, at the RAF Museum, Hendon. Unfortunately R.G. Head's talk on Boelcke has had to be cancelled, however, our main guest speaker

Ian Castle will examine the Gotha and Giant raids of 1917-18. Attendance has decreased recently, but I would urge anyone who can make the trip to do so. It is the opportunity for the membership to guide the Committee's decision making.

Attendance at regional meetings is variable but they provide regular opportunities for us to get together and discuss our interest. Members in the Lincolnshire and Humberside area may be pleased to learn that Paul Hare now is trying to organise local meetings there and anyone interested in attending can contact Paul, whose details appear on the Contents Page.

The Committee held a Strategic View on 15 February. Led by Graham Mottram, former Director of the FAA Museum, its aim was to analyse the current position of the Society and consider where we want to be in five years' time. A simple SWOT analysis showed that we have considerable strengths, but also some weaknesses that need to be addressed. Principal among the latter is the fact that the running of the Society and the production of your journal are undertaken by a small handful of people. All of the tasks involved are all well within the capacities of anyone who attempts them and I would ask for volunteers to act as understudies for all Committee posts.

There has been much discussion lately of the amount of journal material of interest to the modelling fraternity. As pointed out at our recent meeting, many of us probably became interested in aviation through modelling. I've always taken the view that we provide a lot of good quality photographs (valuable research material) illustrating airframes and colour schemes, occasionally include colour profiles and, when relevant, scale line drawings. There is a commercial modelling press and direct competition seems futile, to me. However, recent events have caused me to re-think. The, hopefully temporary, suspension of activity by Albatros Publications has created a void. Members who are modellers will still need a 'fix' and information about new and planned kit/decal releases is something that I'm sure they will want. To plug that gap, I asked Joe Moran if he would help and Joe graciously agreed.

Beginning with the next issue, I'm creating a new, two-page 'department' to go alongside Logbook, Fabric and Bookshelf. It will be produced by Joe and provide modelling news.

## This Issue

The late-war designs by the Sopwith Aviation Company have tended to receive less coverage than they deserve. Colin Owers goes some way towards addressing that in his study of the Hippo, Bulldog and Buffalo. The large selection of available photographs allows a good visual record of the airframe designs and their developmental modifications.

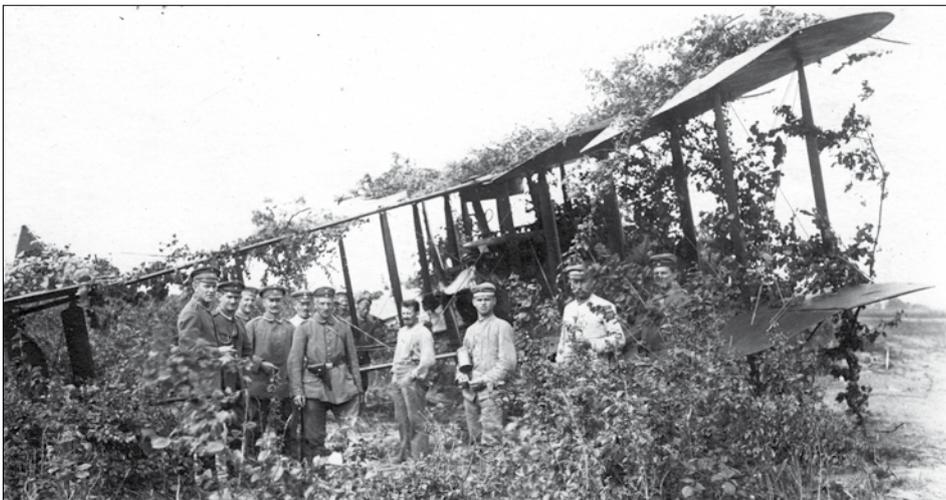
Material by Elimor Makevet, one of the most thorough researchers, has appeared previously in this journal. Now he examines one small incident from the war in 1917 Palestine and illustrates the depth of information that can be turned up if a full range of sources are used.

Paul Hare has turned his attention from Royal Aircraft Factory designs to the career of one officer who flew them. C.J. Burke was a major figure in the early days of the RFC and his rise in that service is examined. Photographs show Burke's time with the Air Battalion and with 2 Squadron at Montrose but shots of the RFC in France, during the first year of the war, are few and far between. Fortunately, Peter Dye, researching Brooke-Popham, uncovered some wonderful cartoons drawn by Arthur S. Walker, who served with the RFC's HQ staff. These show major personalities, most of whom are mentioned in the text, and fit well in the article. The artist has captured the essence of his subjects; Brooke-Popham for one, striding with a bunch of organisational papers under his arm, but I'd love to know the story behind the sketch of Maurice Baring.

Ian Burns's later research expands the story of the loss of HMS *Ben-my-Chree*, updating his book (still available through the CCI website) with newly discovered details.

Paul Leaman's promised look at captured German aircraft now takes to the air in an introduction to be followed by a detailed, multi-part study of machines given G numbers in the British serial system. Numerous photographs will illustrate this: the end product should provide the last word on the subject.

It's always good to receive feedback on articles published in the journal and David Barnes's willingness to share the photos that appear in *Logbook* should be applauded. To me, the sequence seems to suggest revenge for Gillingham's death. The grisly images of the von Eschwege crash site suggest that rather a lot of explosive was used in the dummy balloon. *Mick Davis*



### EDITOR'S CHOICE

*Modelling is mentioned above and here's an interesting challenge for anyone wishing to create a different sort of diorama using the Wingnut Wings FE2b. A6424 was a 160-hp 101 Squadron machine, issued to the unit from 2 ASD on 15 April 1918. It went missing during a Night Reconnaissance of the Peronne district on 16 June and its crew members, Captain R.O. Purry and 2Lt W.H.A. Rickett, were made POW. Presumably in an attempt to hide the machine's capture, or prevent its destruction by the Allies, it was camouflaged with the vegetation shown.*  
:Colin Huston

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