



Editorial

Hopefully, you won't be able to see the join. The production of this issue has been somewhat different to its predecessors. The process, hitherto, has been that, after selecting material for each issue, I set the articles out in a MS Word template that matches the journal layout, placing text and illustrations as I would like them to appear. Colin and Barbara have then taken my layout and, using their considerable skill with Adobe InDesign, have turned it into a professional job that is printer ready.

That's been great and Colin and Barbara have been doing this for years. The benefit to members has been the saving in production costs, which has been passed on in the form of higher quality paper used in the journal, an increase in the number of pages, the addition of more colour work and subscriptions that have been frozen for many years.

The Society has now built up a healthy surplus of funds, but Colin and Barbara cannot keep on doing this work for ever. So it was decided that, before any crisis might occur, my layout should be passed on to our printers, Warwick, who would do the tidying up. Colin and Barbara have kept an overview of this trial run and, hopefully, their input can be progressively reduced, allowing them to concentrate on maintaining the Society's digital photograph archive.

Royal Air Force Museum

CCI is a registered charity and our surplus of funds has meant that we have been able to make a significant contribution to the RAFM's collection. An original 74 Squadron record book, which covers that famous unit during its formative period, was drawn to the Museum's attention by John Grech and recently appeared in an auction catalogue. We offered a contribution to assist the Museum's bid for the book, which was successful, and it is now in the Hendon collection. We will receive a scan for our archive.

The other news relating to Hendon is the Dolphin. It's ready at last and will be unveiled on Friday 16 March. Our monograph on the type, see advert on inside rear cover, will be published on the same date. The Society has been involved in aspects of its completion at Cosford and photographs in the monograph will give a good indication of the craftsmanship that has gone into its reconstruction.

Forthcoming Events

Paul Leaman may have stepped down as editor of this journal but he has continued work on behalf of the Society. His hard work and attention to detail are reflected in the achievement

Front cover: *Sopwith Camel D8237, flown by Capt J. Cottle; by Simon Smith GAvA (<http://sasmithart.co.uk>)*

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IWM	Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London
MOD	Ministry of Defence - Crown Copyright
TNA	The National Archives
RAFM	Royal Air Force Museum, Hendon
FAAM	Fleet Air Arm Museum, Yeovilton
AWM	Australian War Memorial, Canberra
NARA	US National Archives & Records Administration

of our charitable status and Paul has applied the same dedication and skill to the organisation of this year's seminar, to be held at York over the weekend of 22-24 June. Details are given on p.069 and the list of speakers is impressive – all acknowledged experts on our subject. Please attempt to support this event if you can; attendance doesn't have to be for the full weekend.

The other event in the first half of this year is our Annual General Meeting, to be held at Hendon on Saturday 21 April. It's your opportunity to have a say in the running of the Society and the composition of its committee, so please try to be there. It's also a social event; a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and make new ones, as well as an excuse to view Hendon's magnificent collection of historic aircraft.

This Issue

The lead article is, as promised, the feature by Dr Jiří Rajlich, Director of the History Documentation Dept at the Military History Institute, Prague, on the historic aerial combat over Italy on 31 August 1918. Previously published in Czech, few of our readers may have seen it before and it does bring some new information to the subject. It's also been a learning curve for me and has highlighted the potential pitfalls of having foreign material translated into English.

The article has also served as a vehicle for colour work. I'm sure all will agree that Simon's front cover painting is splendid, just what I'd wanted for the first issue of the year. Arvo has excelled himself with the colour profiles and I'm particularly pleased with those of the Flik 3J Albatros D.III's (Oef). Identifying colours is seldom easy but, with the assistance provided through Roger's contact with Peter Plattner in Austria, I think it's safe to say that these profiles are probably as accurate as anything yet published.

Jeff Jefford's short piece gives information that was new to me and, although it, too, had been published elsewhere, I consider it a valid inclusion, as it reveals that the bravery of the RFC wireless operators who worked with forward artillery batteries actually was recognised by higher authority.

Stewart Taylor's biography of Fred Kantel provides a look at a unit which isn't as well documented as some: 54 Squadron. The photographs on p.37-39 came as a bonus, sent separately on Stewart's behalf by Aaron Weaver of OTF. They provide a good look at what was, obviously, a prize capture.

Paul Leaman's coverage of the Seaplane Atlas is, mainly, a photographic study in this issue. The reason is that there were no data sheets for most of the early Friedrichshafen designs, but exclusion from this series could not be justified.

It's been a while since we had an airship article in the journal and so Mike Dunn's should please those whose interest is in lighter-than-air machines, while Paul Hare's study of the SE4 continues to provide detailed information on Royal Aircraft Factory products.

The Royal Aero Club certificate listings were concluded in the last issue and I wanted something to continue the Logbook section. It occurred to me that there were interesting aeroplane types that were produced in relatively small numbers and, therefore, would not warrant a publication along the lines of our Nieuport, FE and Dolphin monographs. The Vickers FB5, Moranes and the Bristol MI series sprang to mind, as well as several types used for training. My idea is to take two sections from our monograph format, the serial listing and airframe development, and combine them with a statistical analysis of service use that Trevor Henshaw has kindly offered to provide. The series starts with a particular favourite of mine, the Bristol Scout. The types to be covered saw considerable use in the training role and, as ever, there is little in the way of National Archive information on this. Therefore, if anyone has logbook or photographic information to add, Trevor and I would be very grateful.

Mick Davis