



Editorial

THIS ISSUE MAY have been delivered slightly later than hoped for. The journal's final layout is set up by Colin and Barbara and something we've all feared has

transpired. Barbara has been in hospital and, obviously, her welfare is Colin's priority. My thoughts, and, I'm sure, those of many others, are with them both. Hopefully, Warwick, have done us proud in completing the setup of this issue, but it would be nice to think that their participation is short lived and that normal service will soon be resumed. This situation highlights my appeals for greater member involvement in the day-to-day running of this Society and, particularly, in journal production.

The Society's finances are healthy enough to absorb this setback in the short to medium term but **next year's subscriptions will be rising to £28.00**, due to rising costs, particularly postage, and exchange rate changes. Overseas rates will be: Europe £30.00/€47.00, rest of the world £39.00/\$60.00 surface/£40.00/\$63.00 air. The negligible difference between surface and air mail for the rest of the world means that we are considering dropping the former at some point in the future.

We have, over the years, acquired a vast amount of material that forms the Society's archive. Much of it has been bequeathed, including the Mike O'Connor collection and papers from Frank Cheesman. Graham Mottram is taking the lead in putting all this information together and the intention is to make its contents more widely available to members of CCI. Once he has collected it all, Graham will work through it to compile a ledger of the contents. Obviously, this isn't a short-term project but the end result should be of great benefit. A permanent home for the archive is necessary and one possibility is Stow Maries. I'll provide updates in this column when definite decisions have been made.

This Issue

Stewart Taylor, as ever, provides a lot of background information in his biography of Oliver Gagnier, an unsung RNAS pilot whose flying career was, probably, typical of those for most other airmen. The, seemingly, endless stock of Stewart's material is something that I, as editor, am extremely grateful for and the numerous insights that he provides about people and events must be of great value to all historians.

We are similarly fortunate in having access to David Méchin's researches into French aviation and, in contrast to Stewart's piece, he has provided a biography of a better-known airman, Georges Madon. David's excellent colour profiles, on the outer rear cover, should provide inspiration for modellers.

How to provide for modellers is something that has occupied a lot of my recent thinking because this is, after all, a society of aviation historians. With that in mind, I've considered role models to follow and concluded that the best is the Datafile series produced by Ray Rimell via Albatross publications and incorporating historical information, numerous photographs and relevant drawings. It would be pointless to duplicate subjects already covered but there are lesser-known types and derivations of well-known ones that can form the basis for in-depth studies. With that still in mind, I looked at the brilliant new Camels kits from Wingnut and wondered if something could be done. Phil Jarrett has already given us everything we needed to know about the DC version and so I considered the night-flying machines, particularly the 'Comic'. The result appears in this issue and represents the sort of feature I'd like others to follow. Mike Kelsey is already preparing something like this on the BE12s used in Macedonia and if others have suggestions for future features, I'd like to hear from them.

Juraj Cervenka's feature on Bratislava-born airmen gives us a view from 'the other side', while Andrew Harvey gives a first-hand account of one British pilot's experiences of war flying in 1916. There will be two further parts to Paul Leaman's series on captured German aircraft, but in this issue he begins to cover the second series of numbers allocated to such machines.

Editor's Choice

It's amazing to see the vast numbers of 'new' WWI photographs that appear on internet auction sites, particularly Ebay. Starting prices are sometimes astronomical and the bidding process can inflate them out of all proportion. Occasionally, a real gem appears and its significance isn't recognised by the punters. One such is this rare shot obtained by Andy Kemp; not just a bunch of wrecked Camels but what was left at la Gorgue of the 16 machines that were burnt in the face of the German advance on the orders of Major C. Draper.

Mick Davis



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