



# Editorial

Mick Davis

The pandemic has affected all societies such as ours. An immediate consequence was the cancellation of our AGM at Hendon. It would have been unthinkable twenty years

ago but, in this digital age, we were able to hold the meeting using Zoom. It may have been very much an experiment, but it worked. The number of participants may have been relatively small, but an immediate advantage was the inclusion of members from outside the UK and Ireland; normally attendance would have been prohibited due to travel time and costs. It remains to be seen whether this will become the norm, but we have also had several committee meetings using Zoom and they are as effective as face-to-face ones.

I haven't heard of the pandemic having any effect on membership but its aging profile means that we inevitably lose older members each year. In addition to Paul Leaman and Colin Ashford, 2020 has also seen the passing of Stewart Taylor, one of the world's great aviation historians. We are fortunate to possess a huge catalogue of Stewart's articles yet to be published and his name will appear in this journal for many years to come.

## This Issue

Stewart was fortunate enough to know many WWI airmen personally and made contact with numerous descendants. I selected the feature on Kenneth Watson as it shows, I think, Stewart's writing at its best, full of detail about both personalities and aeroplanes, as well as being profusely illustrated. The inclusion of those illustrations was made possible by the hard work of Alan Simpson, who carefully scanned and enhanced the sixty or so negatives that Stewart had supplied.

It took a few months of Alan's spare time to do the work and this highlights the need for others to help out with this process. Each issue contains 150+ images and their preparation is beyond the time that a single person can give every three months.

The second, concluding part of David Mechin's biography of Rene Fonck covers a period well outside our area of interest but I think is worthy of inclusion because it rounds off the story and shows that not all WWI heroes retained their status.

We have had a previous article on remote controlled aircraft, but Steve Mills' feature provides some extra information and illustrations, hence its inclusion.

Paul Hare has taken a break from giving the histories of individual BE2s and gone for a look at an example of another Factory product, FE8 7624 and its unfortunate pilot T.G. Mapplebeck. It is surprising how many photographs were available of that particular aeroplane.

It's been a while since Colin Owers has featured in the journal and so his look at early Wright machines with the US Navy provides us with something different from his earlier features on wartime flying boats.

Many of the articles submitted for publication are quite lengthy but short ones are equally welcome. Fitting selected features into a finite number of pages requires 'fillers' – short articles of one, two or three pages. Roger Green's piece, a letter written by Arthur Rhys Davids, fitted the bill perfectly for this

issue and provides some insight into the thoughts of that great pilot.

## Next Year

Mike Kelsey has to be acknowledged as our authority on the air war over Macedonia and his latest offering is a detailed history of Armstrong Whitworth FK3 6219, the machine which was captured intact by the Bulgarian forces, used by the enemy as a bomber against targets in the British sector and then lost in action. The text is accompanied by numerous photographs and detailed maps.

Paschalis Palavouzis has given us a wartime history of the Greek Naval Air Service and his colleague, Pavlos Tsekasis is now preparing a history of the service's Asia Minor campaign 1919-1922, in which ex-British machines, such as DH9s and Sopwith Camels, were used. I had hoped to include it in this issue but Pavlos, initially, had difficulty accessing material in the Hellenic Air Force Museum – that problem has been overcome.

Ian Burns has submitted yet another blockbuster – a detailed, two-part history of Nieuport floatplanes in the eastern Mediterranean.

A similar feature will be Peter Cowlan's look at the employment of Short seaplanes in the Aegean.

Other major features include a pair of MA dissertations from students at the University of Wolverhampton – the topics being the performance of the British aircraft industry and the application of air power on the western front during 1915.

Inevitably, there will be other, shorter articles as well and more from SKT, starting with the biography of 10N Squadron's G.E. Nash.

## Spare Photographs

Stewart's Watson article was tail-heavy with illustrations, so I've used some of the spares on the rear cover. Another is presented below and a second on the contents page.



'A neat nose job'. Camel E7327, Y at Bickendorf, January-February 1919. 2Lt R.N. Atwater had used E7327 to send a DVII down in flames on 30 October 1918.

:Loggie Album

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