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Cross & Cockade International
The First World War Aviation Historical Society

Wind in the Wires

Welcome to the twelfth quarterly newsletter from **Cross & Cockade International**, bringing you all that's new and interesting in the world of WW1 aviation.



Yes - twelve - that's three years of **Wind in the Wires!** Our subscription numbers are climbing, and are now only just below the magic thousand mark; so if you know someone who would appreciate what we offer, please let them know by sending them this link: <http://bit.ly/1tWo5WJ>

The first issue of Volume 46 will be leaving the printers in early March, and as ever is packed with fascinating material to keep you happily reading by the fireside during these cold winter evenings.

The excellent cover photo leads us into Paul Hare's article on the RE5, which was originally presented to the lucky attendees at our June 2014 Seminar. Ian Burns gives us an insight into the lives of those who operated Kite Balloons in Salonika and Gallipoli, and there's a biography from the prolific Stewart Taylor, this time on Canadian ace Capt CRR Hickey. Plus there's so much more!

There's also the regulars, with Paul Leaman's "German Seaplane Atlas", part 21 of Mick Davis' "Gazetteer of UK Flying Sites" covering from Wes to Yar (including the second pair of A2 OS maps of Scottish WW1 aviation sites) and a sixth instalment of Mick & Trevor Henshaw's series on Moranes in RFC service.

If you're into social networking, please feel free join us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#) - and don't forget our [Forum](#)!



First World War In The Air Exhibition Opens

Housed in the Grade II-listed Grahame White Factory building, where aircraft were built during the war, the long-awaited exhibition at the RAF Museum in Hendon was officially opened on 2 December 2014. The patron of the museum, the Duke of Edinburgh, was given a guided tour and met staff, trustees and supporters.

The Duke took particular interest in speaking to 92 year old Air Marshal Sir Freddie Sowrey, whose father and three uncles flew with the Royal Flying Corps. Philip asked Sir Freddie if he had ever



Britain's Largest First World War Airfield

On 10 December 2014, the *Culture24* website posted an interesting story regarding the survey carried out by the **West Norfolk and King's Lynn Archaeological Society** at RFC/RAF **Narborough**.

Part of the 900 acre site was searched systematically, which included the former sites of the officers' quarters, mess huts and technical and machine

flown from Hendon and he replied that he had done so after the war.

Also at the opening, the great niece of Captain Albert Ball VC met a cousin of Germany's legendary ace, the Red Baron, Manfred von Richthofen. Items on display in the exhibition include Captain Ball's field service cap, which he gave to his mechanic, and the Red Baron's leather flying helmet and lucky blue glass dog mascot. Ball's great niece, Vanda Day, a retired illustrator from Nottingham, chatted with Baron Donat von Richthofen and remarked that it was "like history coming to life".

Hendon's sister museum, at Cosford, Shropshire unveiled its own **First World War In The Air Exhibition** on 15 January 2015, which showcases the contribution made by the West Midlands in the race for the sky during the conflict.

<http://bit.ly/1FzsaFw>

Watch out for the exhibition catalogue when published later this year - our own Colin & Barbara Huston are playing a large part in it's design.

RAF Museum Lecture Series

Ross Mahoney, the Museum's resident Aviation Historian, has been in touch with the Society to publicise the series of First

works. Finds included high-class porcelain used to serve officers. A selection of the artefacts has gone on display at **True's Yard Fisherfolk Museum** in King's Lynn, where the objects were initially examined.

<http://bit.ly/1vF19t1>

See <http://bit.ly/16TIR3g> for background information on the site and the numerous squadrons and aircraft that used it.

This summer sees the 100th anniversary of RFC Narborough's formation and research carried out by village resident, David Turner, featured in the *Lynn News* on 19 January 2015. The article says that 40 pilots and observers were killed during training for aerial combat and photographic reconnaissance and it is thought that nearly 1,000 people were on the base at the war's end.

See <http://bit.ly/19a0gp9>



World War lunchtime lectures, which will be running over the coming year. Please see the link to the Museum's [research lecture programme](#), which has the details and more.



Sopwith “Ace” Remembered

The *Oxford Times* published the story of a distinguished 46 Squadron pilot, who lost his life in an accident, flying from the **Port Meadow** training depot in May 1918.

Local historian Peter Smith has been researching the life of **Captain George Edwin Thomson DSO, MC** who was a leading Sopwith Camel ace. Credited with 21 victories, Thomson was born in Rangoon, Burma in 1897 and joined the army in 1914, transferring to the RFC in September 1916. After joining 46 Squadron in the summer of 1917, Thomson had a prolific March 1918 as, during the German Spring Offensive, he scored 15 victories.

He transferred to Home Establishment in

Norfolk village unveils First World War base memorial

The previous month, the *Lynn News* reported that a ceremony had been held at **Little Dunham** to dedicate a memorial to its RFC landing ground. The site, in operation from September 1916 to November 1918, was a satellite station to what became **RAF Marham**.

The history of the site, which was also known as the Sporle landing ground, was uncovered by retired Marham squadron leader, Richard James. The memorial was funded by donations and a grant from the local District Council, says the 17 December 2014 article.

<http://bit.ly/1AntZW8>

England as an instructor. On 23 May 1918 while serving with 7 Training Depot Squadron he took off from Port Meadow, Oxford, after stopping to refuel on a solo cross-country flight. His Camel burst into flames and he died in the resultant crash aged just 20. He was buried at Wolvercote Cemetery, Oxford.

<http://bit.ly/1zWjRop>

Readers of **Victor Yeates'** autobiographic novel **Winged Victory** will perhaps know that George Thomson was Yeates' flight commander in real life - and gets a mention in the book as the much-admired "Tommy".



Crashes at Farnborough

Readers of *Wind in the Wires* will appreciate that a great number of airmen died in flight training, often through accidents or equipment failures. Two recent stories, relating to crashes at Farnborough, graphically illustrate how these fledging pilots met untimely ends.

On 19 January 2015, the always excellent *Great War London* blog (<http://bit.ly/1FzvOzl>) recounted the tragic tale of **Maurice Leigh Gardner** on the centenary of his death. Just eight days after being gazetted as a Second Lieutenant in the RFC, Gardner's Maurice Farman dived and ploughed into the ground, engulfed in flames. The official inquest was inconclusive. It is a well-researched piece and merits a read.

A Meteorologist Remembered

Heading along the M3 motorway, let's go from Farnborough to Bournemouth and to the seaside town's *Daily Echo* article on 31 December 2014. The diaries of Great War serviceman, **Norman Silvester**, have been preserved by his daughter and tell a fascinating story of a varied military career.

Starting the war as a motorcycle despatch rider in France, he was pronounced "unserviceable" in 1915 due to severe headaches. The following year, Silvester joined up with the Royal Naval Air Service to train as a meteorologist. Stationed at **Mullion Air Station** in Cornwall, he provided weather readings for the patrolling airships. A later application to become an RAF pilot in 1918 was unsuccessful due to colour-blindness.

<http://bit.ly/1DGc5ii>



The Forgotten Ace - Maxime Lenoir

Farnborough was again the site of another sad tale in an article posted on the *getHampshire* website on 22 January 2015. Second Lieutenant John Sleeman Reed (pictured) was just 19 and was killed by a falling biplane on Laffins Plain. The pilot, Lieutenant Browning, survived the accident but Reed died of head injuries a few days later. The son of a respected Gorleston-on-Sea doctor, Reed was buried with full military honours in the Norfolk town.

<http://bit.ly/16UwNOI>



Death of a Teenage Warrior

Previewing the "First World War in the Air" exhibition, which opened at RAF Museum, Cosford, in January 2015, the *Shropshire Star* recounted the story of

22 December 2014 would have been the 116th birthday of French ace, **Maxime Lenoir**. In an excellent blog on the *airforces.fr* website, Lenoir's career as an aviation pioneer and later as a fighter pilot over the skies of Verdun was rightly celebrated.

Lenoir, who was born on 22 December 1888 in Charge, was already an experienced pilot by the time war broke out, famous for looping the loop in his Bleriot XI, "Backjumper". He transferred to the French Air Service at the close of 1914 and, in the course over a hundred missions, resulting in 11 victories during 1915-16, Lenoir was twice wounded. He initially served with Escadrille 18 on Caudrons, gaining a reputation as a balloon buster and was transferred to Escadrille N.23 as a fighter pilot. He was known for his SPAD VII named "Trompe la mort III", meaning "death dodger".

The recipient of the Medaille Militaire and the Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur, he was reported missing in action on 25 October 1916 and his body was never found. Overlooked for many years, the blog concludes with the positive news that Lenoir will, hopefully, now receive the recognition he deserves in France.

<http://bit.ly/1zMw39p>

"teenage warrior" Kevin Furniss, who lived just a few miles from the site of the museum.

As the article posted on 21 December 2014 explains, **Second Lieutenant Kevin Robin Furniss** died aged 19 at the height of "Bloody April" in 1917. The museum was handed a treasure trove of documents and personal effects, including his logbook, flying helmet and goggles, which had been kept by his younger sister. Posted to 23 Squadron on 23 March 1917, Furniss was shot down just three weeks later. He was flying a Spad VII.

The short life of Kevin Furniss, who is buried at Cambrai East Military Cemetery, was also the subject of a comprehensive blog post on the RAF Museum website, which includes copies of family correspondence.

<http://bit.ly/1CW16SE>

<http://bit.ly/1yiPkKA>



New Zealand News

There was a nice little piece in the *Otago Daily Times* on 15 January 2015. The delightfully named Wanaka “**Warbirds and Wheels**” Museum has obtained, on loan, the only Rickenbacker car outside the United States. The rare 1924 Model C Roadster features a 117-inch wheelbase, 58hp straight six engine and four wheel brakes. Brainchild of top fighter ace “Fast Eddie” Rickenbacker, his eponymous Motor Company started in 1920 and carried the 94th Fighter Squadron “hat in the ring” emblem.

<http://bit.ly/1vFhSDt>

On 11 November 2014, the **Museum of Transport and Technology** in Auckland issued a press release announcing the launch of a website enabling people to research and upload information about the country’s WW1 pilots and the students that trained at its first flying school based in the city.



A Piece of Cake? The Éclair Propeller

Another French aviation story with links to Verdun caught my eye in the form of a press release dated 16 December 2014. **Dassault Aviation** has agreed to fund the renovation of the **Verdun Memorial** and provide an Éclair propeller from a Spad VII to the museum.

This propeller was invented by a talented aeronautical engineer called Marcel Bloch and was used on other French aircraft, such as Caudrons and Nieuports. Bloch was deported to Buchenwald during the Second World War and, on his return to France, changed his surname to Dassault, the code name used by his resistance-fighter brother, Darius-Paul. Dassault Aviation is the last major family-owned airspace company in the world.

The school trained more than 100 pilots, 83 of which qualified for Royal Aero Club certificates. It was instrumental in helping the war effort and the website will highlight the importance of sharing the stories of these “little known and aviation pioneers and wartime heroes”.

See:

<http://bit.ly/1DGfduv> and <http://bit.ly/1KK4Jf>

[J](#)



Canadian Stories: the Guelph Cenotaph

Guelph is a city in south western Ontario, Canada and its local newspaper has been examining the stories of those named on its memorial to its citizens who died in the First World War. This includes a number of

<http://bit.ly/1KN2sP4>

See also: <http://bit.ly/17hSxEV>



American Pilots At War

Starting on 26 December 2014, the *Scientific American* published in three instalments a first-hand account entitled “**War Experiences of an Air Scout: The Diary of an American Volunteer With the Aviation Corps of the French Army**” by **Frederick C Hild**.

The trilogy of short articles is worth a read. Hild (pictured), who joined the French air forces in September 1914, was back in the United States within a few months and I’ll leave it to you to decide if he was honourably discharged or deserted after the reality of the situation became all too apparent.

aviators and, on 29 December 2014, the Guelph Mercury featured RNAS officer, Captain John Playford Hales.

In an article quoting a number of evocative letters written by Hales, it tells his story from patrolling the Scottish coast to a ferrying machines from England to France during the German spring offensive in 1918. A successful fighter pilot with 9 Squadron (RNAS), flying the Sopwith Camel, he became a flight commander in Collishaw's 203 Squadron RAF. Hales was shot down and killed by anti-aircraft fire on 23 August 1918.

<http://bit.ly/16TztM0>



Bert's Bundaberg Boulder

Bert Hinkler was born in Bundaberg, Queensland and learned to fly gliders on Mon Repos Beach in 1911 and 1912.

<http://bit.ly/1EYYwfB>

The story of an American pilot with demonstrably greater gumption than Mr Hild also caught my eye. **Harvey Weir Cook**, who became a member of Eddie Rickenbacker's 94th Aero "Hat in the Ring" Squadron, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his bravery during combat.

An Indiana native, Cook settled in Indianapolis and was instrumental in creating the city's first principal airport, opened in 1931. Cook returned to the Army Air Corps in 1941 and he died on 24 March 1943, in a plane crash whilst training pilots.

<http://bit.ly/1AcCR2a>



Building a Camel in the Basement

West Michigan, USA, is home to **Tom Kozura** and, in an article posted locally

Australia's most important aviator died when his light plane crashed in the Italian Alps on 7 January 1933.

Hinkler worked for the Sopwith Aviation Company before the outbreak of the First World War and enlisted with the RNAS on its commencement. Awarded the DSM for his work as an Observer/Air Gunner on the Western Front, he then trained as a pilot. Hinkler was posted to 28 Squadron RAF in 1918, which was based in Italy. With a string of post-war achievements and awards to his name, including the first solo flight from England to Australia in 1928, Hinkler was as famous as Sir Don Bradman.

A basalt boulder from Mons Repos Beach has now begun its journey to the Italian Alps to become part of a memorial for Hinkler. Once in Italy, the boulder will be shaped by local stonemasons and placed on the site where Hinkler's body was found, about 80 metres from where the plane wreckage was found.

See <http://bit.ly/1xCQPHK> and <http://bit.ly/1MfzP0f> for a more detailed account of Bert's life and times.

on 11 January 2015, the story of his 10 year "labour of love" was told. Fuelled by a fascination for the Sopwith Camel and the purchase of an original dash clock, he resolved to build one of his own and the project is still ongoing.

Tom explains that his aircraft will be "completely authentic" and will be a reproduction and not a replica, due its authentic parts, including a genuine 130hp Clerget 9A rotary engine. Virtually every piece is painstakingly hand-stamped by Kozura himself with the part numbers featured on the blueprints for Sopwith Camel, serial number B2337.

The aircraft will include the data plate from B2337, a Camel that crashed on 24 August 1917, and he hopes to have the reproduction airborne by the centenary of its last flight.

<http://bit.ly/1Kz6Zat>

I also spotted an article about another American enthusiast, Jim Neeley, who is building a Nieuport 28 C-1. A very different project to Kozura's Camel, the Nieuport will have aluminium frame and polyester fabric, as opposed to wood and Irish linen and, instead of a Gnome rotary engine, the completed aircraft will be powered by a Warner radial.

<http://bit.ly/17hWXvv>



Marking the Centenary of the First Zeppelin Raids

A number of community-led events were held across Norfolk to mark the 100th anniversary of the first Zeppelin raids on the county. These were the first air raids on Britain during the First World War and took place on the night of 19 January 1915, with bombs being dropped on Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn. Four people were killed.

Events included the mayor of **Great Yarmouth** laying a wreath on the grave of the first person to be killed, Samuel Alfred Smith. Dozens more people turned out for a second ceremony in St Peter's Plain, a small residential street in the centre of Yarmouth, which suffered the greatest damage during the raid (pictured).

King's Lynn held a full week of commemoration, including a light show projected on the town's historic Custom House and there were many other events, including poetry readings and a



Branch Meetings

London

Due to lack of support , we are sad to announce that we will no longer be running a regular meeting in Central London. This has been our flagship meeting since before the society started to publish its own journal - back in the late sixties - so it's not a decision we've taken lightly.

Jeff Hargrave has worked tirelessly to provide an attractive venue and interesting speakers, and we are very grateful for his valiant efforts.

We suspect that the age of the internet has provided ways for members to communicate that don't involve stepping out into the cold night air ... but if anyone has idea for regular or irregular meetings, please email [Andy Kemp](mailto:andy.kemp@zeppelin.org.uk) or speak up at the AGM - your committee would be happy to consider proposals.

York

performance by a choir. Youngsters went along to True's Yard Museum to make papier-mâché Zeppelins.

There was plenty of coverage in the local press if you want to look further, with the *Eastern Daily Press* leading the way as usual. Start

with: <http://bit.ly/1CinGSP> which has an excellent map of the Zeppelins' route and: <http://bit.ly/1ult5SU>



Plans Announced for Zeppelin Raid Memorials

The 31st of January this year marked the 99th anniversary of a major Zeppelin raid on the Midlands, to include Tipton, Wednesbury, Bilston and Walsall in the "Black Country" and further east in Leicestershire. Both communities are looking at ways to commemorate the centenary of the event.

As the *Express & Star* reported on 30 January 2015, local amateur historian and Tipton Civic Society member, Derek John



Maybe the internet has been slower to make an impact in the North? Whatever the reason the Ackhorne, home of our York Branch, is still attracting good numbers to our quarterly Northern meeting.

The next gathering is at 12:00 on **Saturday 21st February.**

No speakers here; just excellent beer and a group of like-minded folk sharing WW1 aviation photos and knowledge. Looks like they're still not doing food - so bring your own sandwiches!

All the dates for 2015 are on the web site, and all comers are welcome! Full details here: <http://bit.ly/1BVCZRT>

Nicholls (pictured), has been researching the raids in detail and is pressing for a permanent memorial to be erected in order that current and future generations will be aware of what happened. The article also carries eye-witness accounts, photographs and details of the raids.

<http://bit.ly/1DIPuBP>

A few days earlier, the *Leicester Mercury* revealed plans by the **Charnwood Arts Company** to create a performance to mark how the community of Loughborough rallied round after the Zeppelin raid. The performance will use the history, stories and testimonies of those caught up in the events of that night to create links between groups and communities today.

<http://bit.ly/1DIPuBP>



Help Get the Strutter Flying!

Wind in the Wires HQ has just received a request from Gerard Lohan. He is co-ordinating a Crowdfunding campaign on behalf of the **Aircraft Preservation Society, Scotland**. As mentioned way back in issue 2, a group of pensioners are building a full-sized flying replica of a **Sopwith 1 1/2 Strutter**.

The project is very close to being finished but, as with so many things done for love and not for profit, they have hit a financial wall. Gerard has contacted Cross & Cockade as he knows that our members will be interested in the project and might be persuaded to put their hands in their pockets. As you will see from the YouTube video on their Crowdfunding website (see the link below), the work these venerable gentlemen is doing on the Strutter is a joy to behold.

Get your donation in now! <http://bit.ly/1KPf484>

2015 AGM

The date to keep free in your diary this year is **25th April**. It's the usual location, the **RAF Museum, Hendon**.

Doors open at 10:00 and the **Leaman Lecture** takes place at 10:30. This year's speaker is Professor **Jerry White** of the University London, whose subject is "**Zeppelin Nights: London in WW1**".

The formal AGM will follow at 12:00. This year the committee are proposing two amendments to the society's constitution:

First amendment is the deletion of clause 7.4(b)ii which forces officers of the society to stand down on reaching the age of 80 years. Several trustees are approaching this landmark, and we are keen to keep their services while they are prepared to serve. It has been suggested, with possible justification, that this clause is age discriminatory.

Second amendment is to change clause 21.4, to reduce the required number of full committee meetings per year from four to three. The constitutional requirement for four meetings has always proved problematic; with the fourth meeting tending to be very brief, carried out primarily to conform with the constitution.

After lunch everyone is invited to look



A Fillip for Filip

Courtesy of Joe Moran, I have been passed details of the winner of the Cross & Cockade award at the Irish IPMS National Championships. The winner was Filip Servit, who is 41 and hails from Znojmo in the Czech Republic.

Living in Limerick since 2001, his main modelling interests are German SPGs [Ed – what are SPGs?] [Ed: **self propelled guns!**] and he builds WW1 aircraft for, as he told Joe, "variety and fun". He also won a gold medal last year at Telford for a Bristol Fighter (1/48) in a beautiful red and white scheme.

Congratulations to Joe for picking up two bronze medals in different classes in 1/72 scale, one for the Sopwith 1 1/2 Strutter (presumably a bit smaller than the one being built by the Aircraft Preservation Society!).

Australian Society of World War 1 Aero Historians

round the RAF Museum's new **First World War in the Air Exhibition**, which opened in December 2014 and is free to enter.

Please note that this year, for the first time in a long time, we are not holding an auction of review books. Huge thanks go to Phil Jarrett who, as our entertaining auctioneer for as far back as I can remember, did his best to get those present to dip into their deep pockets. Those books that aren't retained for the society's reference library, will be sold via the web site shop.

And finally, a hello to our friends "down under" at the **Australian Society of World War 1 Aero Historians**.

I've just had the pleasure of reading their latest quarterly newsletter, packed with WW1 aviation news and a very useful book review section.

See <http://www.ww1aero.org.au/>

I think I'm safe from Zepps
here—they daren't spoil the
boss's umbrella.



Written by David Marks, edited by Andy Kemp
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