



January 2010

Fleet Air Arm Centenary Sword



The Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators has presented the Fleet Air Arm with a Centenary Sword in recognition of 100 years of innovation, courage and achievement. The sword, which was presented to Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, Rear Admiral Fleet Air Arm by the Master of the Guild, Rear Admiral Colin Cooke-Priest CB CVO FRAeS, will be awarded annually to the Naval Pilot, Observer or Aircrewman who has achieved the finest feat of airmanship during the year.



A year that defined the Character of The Royal Navy

In 2009 the Royal Navy marked the Centenary of Naval aviation with a programme of events and air displays around the country to raise awareness of the role, ethos and history of the Fleet Air Arm and of our Naval aviation heritage.

With Naval aircraft deployed on operations around the world and all areas of defence under severe pressure, it was a year in which the challenges could not have been greater. Despite the demands the Fleet Air Arm continued to deliver with alacrity and style giving a series of thrilling air displays as well as a Service of Thanksgiving in St Paul's Cathedral and a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace.

"It was a year that defined the character of the Royal Navy and epitomised the spirit of the Fleet Air Arm" said Rear Admiral George Zambellas DSC FRAeS. "The organisation and professional way in which the year was promoted was outstanding. The success of the events in London and Liverpool particularly, demonstrated just how much can be achieved with a modest budget and a small and dedicated team."

The year culminated in a Centenary Dinner at the Old Royal Naval College Greenwich in December attended by Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales, The Duke

of York, The Princess Royal and Prince Michael of Kent. Speaking at the dinner, First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope KCB OBE congratulated the Fleet Air Arm on 100 years of exceptional endeavour and spoke of the huge importance of carrier aviation to the UK.

The Fleet Air Arm also welcomed the announcement in December by the Secretary of State for Defence that operations in Afghanistan are to be better supported with new helicopters. Rear Admiral Simon Charlier stated that the announcement brings forward important decisions on replacing ageing aircraft. "The Commando Helicopter Force will have Merlin aircraft earlier than planned and the Sea King ASaC Mk 7 replacement will be aligned with the introduction into service of HMS Queen Elizabeth. Coming at the end of a milestone year for the Fleet Air Arm and coupled with Lynx Wildcat and the new Joint Combat Aircraft, the announcement represents a major stepping stone towards a new and exciting era in Naval aviation."



"This year's Centenary was achieved in the true spirit of the Fleet Air Arm."

HRH The Duke of York
Commodore in Chief
The Fleet Air Arm

FORTHCOMING ANNIVERSARIES

Sustaining the Momentum of Fly Navy 100

- 2010 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Taranto
70th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain
70th Anniversary of RNAS Yeovilton
- 2011 100th Anniversary of the first Naval Flying Training course
70th Anniversary of the sinking of The Bismarck
- 2012 100th Anniversary of the first takeoff of an aircraft from a ship underway
70th Anniversary of Operation Fuller – The Channel Dash
- 2014 100th Anniversary of the Formation of the Royal Naval Air Service
350th Anniversary of the formation of the Royal Marines
- 2015 70th Anniversary of the first jet landing on an aircraft carrier

Distinguished Flying Cross



Lieutenant Commander Gavin Simmonite, a Fleet Air Arm pilot serving with 846 Naval Air Squadron, has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for exemplary airmanship during operations in Afghanistan.

The Distinguished Flying Cross is awarded to individuals for gallantry during active operations against the enemy. Gavin's aircraft was so severely damaged by enemy fire that under normal circumstances it should have been landed immediately. His citation states that 'through his exceptional airmanship and handling skills he was able to nurse the aircraft back to a friendly location and in doing so saved both the aircraft and his crew.'

Gavin praised his fellow crew members saying that their calm professionalism contributed greatly to the safe and successful outcome of the event. Gavin joined the Royal Navy in 1996 and has seen active service in Bosnia, Iraq, Sierra Leone and Afghanistan. He is currently back in southern Afghanistan flying Sea King helicopters with 846 Naval Air Squadron.



Royal Navy Observer Training gets £57m boost

Observer training is to be greatly enhanced with a £57m contract to provide more realistic basic training, including the introduction into service of the new King Air 350 with a state-of-the-art Radar and Tactical Mission Training System to replace the outdated Jetstream aircraft.

Observers are the extended eyes and ears of the ship's operations room and the considerably improved training package will provide an outstanding airborne classroom enabling students to develop the skills required to maximise the fighting capability of the aircraft. Observer training is carried out on 750 Naval Air Squadron at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose and is widely regarded as one of the most rigorous and highly respected training courses in the Navy.

"Students start with no prior knowledge of aviation and are turned

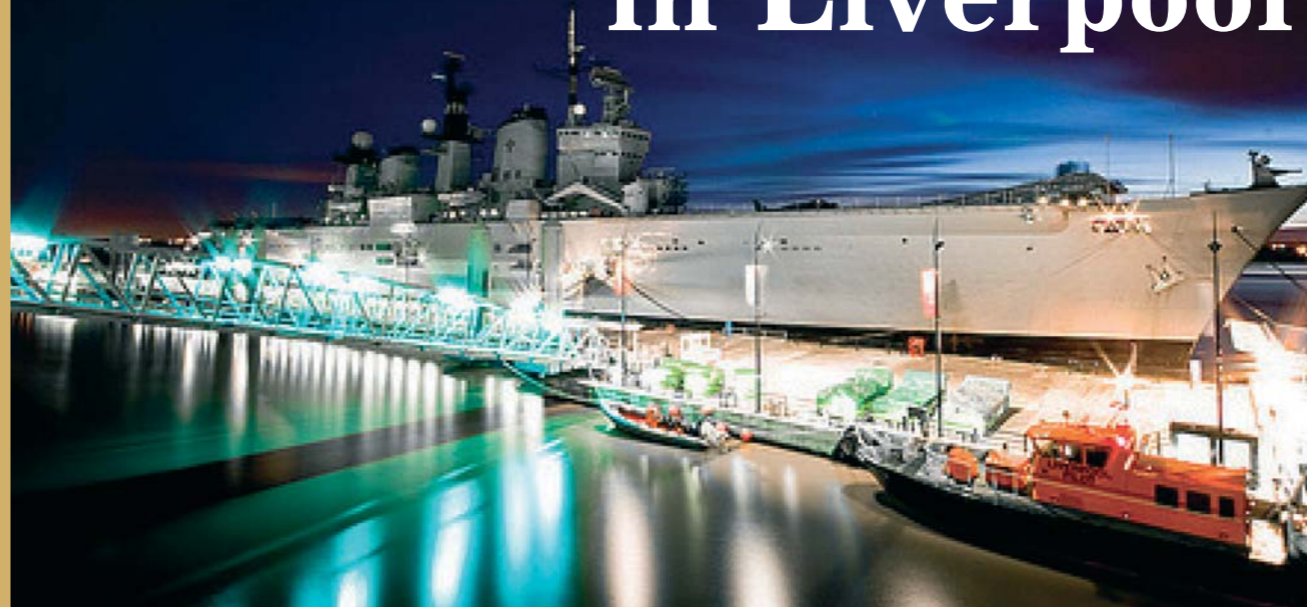


into aircraft captains, capable of taking charge of complex tactical situations anywhere in the world" said Captain Graeme Mackay the Commanding Officer of RNAS Culdrose. "The new training console will be a quantum leap forward – as radical as going from an old imperial typewriter to a modern computer – and the Tactical Mission Training System will allow the instructor to superimpose data on to the student's screen just as they will experience in front line operational flying."

Delivered under a Partnership Agreement with Ascent Flying Training, the King Air 350s will come into service at RNAS Culdrose in 2011. The contract is part of the UK's Military Flying Training System, a private finance initiative that will see sweeping changes in military flying training across all three services over the next ten years. The observer element of the programme will be one of the first to become operational with Fly Navy 100 sponsors, Cobham plc, subcontracted to integrate the radar and Tactical Mission Training System into the aircraft and provide maintenance and airworthiness services.



Fly Navy 100 in Liverpool



The Fly Navy 100 celebrations continued in Liverpool in October with a 40 aircraft flypast along the River Mersey and over HMS Illustrious moored at Liverpool's Cruise Liner Berth.

"The flypast was absolutely outstanding" said Commodore Martin Westwood. "It was immaculate in every way and when you think of the enormous effort it represented at a time when the Fleet Air Arm is spread to every operational theatre, it was truly a momentous occasion."

Lt Cdr Mike Pamphill on who led the flypast said "It was amazing. Crowds lined the banks of the Mersey for ten miles as we flew in."

The five day Fleet Air Arm in the public eye event attracted over 100,000 people with 15,000 people a day watching the daily flying demonstrations and visiting the static park displays.

Over 500 guests watched the flypast from the flight deck of HMS Illustrious including HRH The Duke of York KG, Commodore in Chief of the Fleet Air Arm, the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Liverpool and Fleet Air Arm veterans who had served in the Battle of the Atlantic. Speaking at the reception, Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Trevor Soar KCB OBE said "Much of the Battle of the Atlantic against the U-boat threat was fought and won from Liverpool. The courageous actions of Fleet Air Arm pilots flying from Naval Fighter Catapult Ships was little known at the time. Their bravery was remarkable. The nation owes them and the City of Liverpool a debt of gratitude."



"HMS Illustrious' visit to Liverpool, the Centenary flypast, the Naval aircraft displays and static park attracted nearly 100,000 people over five days – three times as many as Navy Days. It was a hugely successful public eye event."

Captain Ben Key Royal Navy
Commanding Officer
HMS Illustrious



"The Fleet Air Arm has never been busier but there is still sea-blindness. We need to ensure greater public understanding of all that we do."

Over the past 100 years Naval aviation has sometimes been misrepresented or not understood. Our Centenary celebrations, however, have achieved widespread recognition of the fact that the Fleet Air Arm is a formidable fighting arm, a leading force of expertise on all aspects of shipborne aviation operations and a ubiquitous provider of joint air power.

The celebratory events of 2009, particularly the fly pasts over HMS Illustrious in London and Liverpool, the Service in St Paul's Cathedral and the Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace were outstanding, bringing the whole Fleet Air Arm community together, as well as being successful Royal Navy public eye events enjoyed by thousands of others.

The distinctive ethos that characterises the Fleet Air Arm – our relaxed but highly professional brand of airmanship, our sense of humour, teamwork and can-do attitude and our innovative and imaginative approach has also shone through this year, clearly defining all that we stand for.

We have also carried the carrier arguments, based firmly on the principle that Sea Power and Air Power combined offer significant strategic, operational and tactical advantage. In taking Fly Navy 100 forward, our intention must be to continue to nurture the enormous goodwill generated this year, to gain greater public awareness and understanding and to promote our culture and expertise, as an essential element in our future success.

Tomorrow's Fleet Air Arm will depend upon our ability to work alongside, and gain influence with our partners in the joint and international arena. We must also take our heritage seriously, developing standards of conservation, promotion and explanation that set us apart. 2010 is the 70th anniversary of Taranto and 2014 is the Centenary of the formation of the Royal Naval Air Service. Our heritage provides the context for all that we do today – and in this we need support – we cannot afford to leave it to benign neglect.

It has been an honour to be Rear Admiral Fleet Air Arm during such a momentous year. The Fleet Air Arm vision is to produce future carriers, squadrons and flights that are unit-for-unit and man-for-man, the best in the world enabling the Royal Navy to be the leading exponent of Maritime Force Projection – ready to fight and win what ever the next 100 years brings.

Rear Admiral Simon Charlier
Chief of Staff Aviation and Carriers
Rear Admiral Fleet Air Arm



1909 - 2009



Flying Royal Marines

The tradition of Flying Royal Marines began at the outset of Naval aviation when Lieutenant EL Gerrard RM was assigned to flying duties with the first Naval Airship, the 'Mayfly', in 1910. However, even before the 'Mayfly' was delivered Lieutenant Gerrard had already been selected to join the first Naval flying training course.

By the outbreak of the First World War, 10 Royal Marine aviators were already in the Royal Naval Air Service. Thereafter a total of 16 RM pilots and observers served during the war, nearly all in senior appointments. One of the first into action was Lieutenant C H Collet RM, who led the first ever strategic bombing raid on German Zeppelin sheds. Notably, Major F H Sykes, a Cavalry Officer, was commissioned into the Royal Marines as a Colonel to command all RNAS operations in the Eastern Mediterranean and at Gallipoli. Sykes was appointed Chief of the Air Staff in 1918, when the RAF was created, before being relieved by Trenchard one year later. Therefore, the first Chief of Air Staff was a former Royal Marines Officer.



In 1924, 19 Royal Marines volunteered for pilot training when the new Naval flying wing, the Fleet Air Arm of the RAF, was formed. From that moment on, Royal Marine aviators have been an integral part of Naval aviation. During this period, Lieutenant O Cathcart-Jones RM, made the first night deck landing in a single-seater fighter in 1929, while others were involved on operations in Turkey, China and Palestine.

Subsequently, 31 Royal Marine pilots, 2 observers and 9 NCOs flew with distinction during the Second World War. Of these, 18 commanded squadrons or wings and 8 became Commanders

(Air) of Aircraft Carriers. Of particular note, Captain O Patch RM took part in the Battle of Taranto and Major V B G Cheesman RM led 1770 Squadron's Fireflies in a strike against the Tirpitz. Royal Marines also played a significant role in the Far East. Major R C Hay RM became the Air Co-ordinator British Pacific Fleet comprising 4 Carrier Air Groups, two of which were commanded by Royal Marines.

Post second World War, a further 8 Royal Marines trained as fixed wing pilots, among them Captain P J F Whiteley RM, who returned to the Corps to complete a distinguished career as CGRM and CinCAFORTH as a General. The advent of the Commando Carrier, the Indonesian Confrontation and the development of the Wessex troop lift helicopter created a demand for additional pilots and during the 1960s, 25 regular officers and 17 Special Entry Officers served as helicopter pilots. Of these, Captain M J Reece RM became the first Royal Marine to command a Royal Navy Helicopter Squadron. Concurrently, each RM Commando was being equipped with a flight of Sioux helicopters which, in 1968, was centralised to form the 3 Commando Brigade Air Squadron. From then on 3 Commando Brigade Air Squadron formed the backbone of Royal Marines aviation seeing service in the Falklands and Iraq before becoming 847 Naval Air Squadron.

Today, the Royal Marines continue to contribute as much as 25% of the Fleet Air Arm. The Commando Helicopter Force has a high proportion of Royal Marines both in the Sea King and Lynx communities and in support and command appointments. Royal Marines are also flying Harriers with the Joint Harrier force and, significantly, in 2006 Major Mark Hammond RM was awarded the DFC for operations in Afghanistan whilst on exchange with the RAF flying Chinooks.

Royal Marine aviators are continuing to make history today. For the first time in 70 years, Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton has a Royal Marine Commanding Officer. Brigadier Mark Noble Royal Marines took command of the Air Station in July 2009.



"RNAS Yeovilton's primary role is delivering fully operational Squadrons and support units to the front line. We are directly involved in current operations worldwide."

"I have served at RNAS Yeovilton three times and feel hugely privileged to return as the Commanding Officer" said Brigadier Noble. "Yeovilton is playing a key role in current operations providing aircraft from both Commando and Lynx Helicopter Forces to Afghanistan and globally at sea. We are also the home of a number of major support units including the Royal Navy Schools of Fighter and Aircraft Control and the Armoured Support Group Royal Marines, who have recently returned from a difficult deployment to Afghanistan"

In recent months an exciting new era has also begun at Yeovilton with the commissioning of 700W, the Lynx Wildcat Squadron. "Wildcat will be a formidable new multi-role helicopter optimised for both maritime and battlefield environments. It is a challenging programme re-affirming Yeovilton's future at the forefront of naval aviation" said Brigadier Noble.



Royal Navy Sea King Airborne Surveillance and Control (ASaC) helicopters are flying day and night in southern Afghanistan providing continuous area surveillance information critical to Coalition and Special Forces operations.

Working closely with the wider intelligence and surveillance community the Sea King ASaCs are at the forefront of the UK defence effort in Helmand Province. "The deployment of maritime aircraft to battlefield operations is another example of the broad capability and flexibility of Naval aviation," said Commander Matt Avison. "857 Naval Air Squadron recently relieved 854 Squadron who have returned to RNAS Culdrose for well earned leave and work up before they re-deploy to Afghanistan in the New Year."



ASaCs in Afghanistan



MASU Receives RAeS Award

Fleet Forward Support's Mobile Aircraft Support Unit (MASU) has received a prestigious award from the Royal Aeronautical Society for their work in carrying out repairs to battle damaged aircraft in Iraq and Afghanistan.



The MASU Repair Section has carried out structural repairs to 143 damaged UK helicopters in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2005.

"Despite fighting on two fronts, MASU's small yet highly specialised teams are a true force multiplier" said Rear Admiral Simon Charlier. "Time and time again the efforts of this small team have returned critical aircraft to operational service when they would otherwise have had to be returned to the UK or destroyed." The team has faced tasks ranging from small arms fire skin repairs, airframe fatigue cracking and significant structural damage repairs due to rocket attacks. "Although many of our repairs are as a result of enemy action, some of our biggest challenges stem from incidents which are a direct result of operations at the very limit of aircraft and aircrew capabilities" said Lieutenant Commander Andy Dunn, the Repair Manager with MASU.

The Royal Aeronautical Society award was presented to Lieutenant Commander Dunn by the Chief of the Air Staff at the annual RAeS Wilbur and Orville Wright Lecture Dinner in December.

847 Squadron wins Operational Capability Award

847 Naval Air Squadron has been awarded the Australia Shield for 2009. This highly prestigious Fleet Air Arm award is presented annually to the front line Squadron demonstrating the highest level of operational capability. Speaking at the award ceremony in September 2009, Rear Admiral Simon Charlier said "The award of the Australia Shield to 847 Squadron is a reflection of an exceptionally busy and productive year during which the Squadron deployed to Iraq, Norway, France, Arizona and Afghanistan."

847 Squadron is now looking forward to a deployment to Norway, a period embarked in HMS Ocean for Exercise Auriga and then upgrading to the more powerful engines of the Lynx Mk 9A before another deployment to Afghanistan.



Survival at Sea

Flying from ships at sea always carries the risk of ditching or crashing into the water. Early Naval aircraft were light and impacted with the water at relatively low speeds. Even if they tipped over, they usually floated and the pilot was recovered without getting wet. As aircraft speeds increased, however, the chances of survival following an accident or controlled landing became increasingly hazardous.

With the advent of the modern jet fighter surviving an aircraft accident at sea began to present unique and difficult challenges. High speed

crashes into the sea gave rise to complex physical, mechanical and physiological factors all of which had a part to play in influencing aircrew chances

of survival. Knowing how to escape safely from a submerging aircraft, coping with disorientation, rapid pressure changes, impaired vision and problems of canopy, door or hatch jettison all demanded rigorous survival training drills and procedures to give aircrew the best possible chance of beating the odds.

The Royal Navy Safety Equipment Branch was set up in 1943 and has been a driving force in ensuring optimum survivability rates at sea for over sixty years. From the early days of Wrens packing life rafts and parachutes, to the meticulous maintenance of today's sophisticated helmets, oxygen masks, immersion suits, anti-G suits and multi-seat life rafts, the principles of looking after survival equipment and training personnel to use it are as critical today as they have ever been.

In recent years responsibility for survival has become part of the Defence Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Extraction Training Organisation with the wider remit of preparing aircrew for operations in all theatres of war including desert, jungle and arctic survival as well as survival at sea.



Safety Equipment Association

The Royal Navy Safety Equipment and Survival Association was formed in 2003 and has over 130 members. President of the Association, Lieutenant Commander Martyn Helliwell, said "Our members are proud of having served in the Fleet Air Arm Survival Equipment Branch. Few people appreciate the complexities of maintaining and operating Survival Equipment or of the responsibility involved. Flying clothing, helmets, life-jackets, oxygen masks, immersion suits, anti-G suits, life rafts and CO2 cylinders all have to be in perfect working order. An important part of the job is instructing aircrew in the correct procedures for survival."

The Branch holds an annual reunion and this year met at Bosworth Hall, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire in October. Membership is open to all ex and serving SE personnel and anyone who has an affiliation to the branch. For further information contact Secretary Gordon Parkes T. 01483 823181 gordon.parkes@ntlworld.com www.faasurvivalassociation.co.uk



Aviation Medicine

It is perhaps not surprising that from the earliest exploits of the Royal Naval Air Service, interest in survival at sea attracted the attention of a unique breed of doctors – Medical Officers with a specialist knowledge of Aviation Medicine.

One of the earliest flying doctors was Surgeon Lieutenant HG Anderson who joined the RN at the outset of the First World War. He was taught to fly by the RNAS and in 1919 he published the first textbook in Aviation Medicine 'The medical and surgical aspects of aviation.'

Anderson was assisted by a staff surgeon, Surgeon Lieutenant HV Wells RN, a young doctor who was very forward thinking for his time. Wells wrote in the Journal of the Royal Naval Medical Service in 1915 and 1916, important articles about the requirement for Naval aviators to have restraint harnesses and head protection.

With the first jet-powered aircraft coming into service after the Korean War, maritime aviation medicine was suddenly faced with a plethora of challenges that came with the new technology.

A number of Naval Medical Officers proved equal to this challenge, characterised not only by the excellence of their work but by their willingness to act as guinea pigs, experimenting on themselves whenever new pieces of kit or ideas needed to be put to the test. Two such eminent pioneers were Surgeon Commander Herbert Ellis, later to be Dr Herbert Ellis AFC and Surgeon Lieutenant John Rawlins later to be Vice Admiral Sir John Rawlins KBE, FRCP, FRAeS.

'Herb' was awarded his Royal Navy pilot wings in 1946 and was appointed to the Institute of Aviation Medicine in 1949. During his time there he flew over 100 different experimental aircraft and made a significant study of the visual aspects of carrier flying operations. For this work and his many other contributions to Naval aviation he gained a PhD and was awarded the Air Force Cross.

"John Rawlins and I certainly had some fun during this productive period," said Dr Ellis, "although all those acceleration and shaking experiments and subjecting myself to some incredible 'G' forces have left me a bit wobbly now!" Dr Ellis captured his Naval aviation exploits in an

entertaining autobiography titled 'Hippocrates RN.'

Sir John Rawlins was the Navy's first Specialist in Aviation Medicine at Farnborough and is highly respected for his work in the field of naval aviation safety. In 1950 he was awarded the MBE for his work on protective helmets, the



early bone domes and in 1960 he was advanced to OBE for his experiments to develop a method of enabling aircrew to eject from an aircraft that had submerged under water. Months of meticulous trials were carried out during which Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Sandy Davidson RN (later Surg Captain OBE) bravely conducted a live test ejection underwater.

The British immersion suit or 'goon' suit, made of Egyptian cotton fabric with rubber wrist and neck seals, is another British innovation that is in standard use in many navies and continues to save lives to this day.

The work of Surgeon Commander Frank Golden (later Surg Rear Admiral OBE) who also experimented on himself, remarkably catheterising his own heart to prove the physiology involved, led to the introduction of the twin-stop, horizontal lift configuration to forestall circulatory collapse in survivors of cold water immersion incidents. It was another spectacular Naval Aviation Medicine breakthrough that has saved many lives.

Safe in these Hands



From its inception in 1945 to the present day the Aircraft Handler branch has played a continuous and vital role in the safe handling of aircraft at sea.

Affectionately known as 'Chockheads', Aircraft Handlers operate as a close knit team and have a strong esprit de corps. On a busy flight deck with aircraft launching or recovering at 30 to 40 second intervals there is no margin for error. "I will never forget my first arrested landing" said one Buccaneer pilot "the deceleration was amazing but what was more amazing and alarming was the urgency and proficiency with which you were marshalled away from the angled flight deck to your parking spot. The wire was immediately reset and checked in order for the next aircraft to land. It was all extremely slick."

Aircraft Handlers attend an intensive 30 week training course in manoeuvring aircraft into tight parking spots on crowded flight decks and are highly skilled in hangar fire fighting, airfield crash rescue and driving flight deck tractors, fire engines and heavy goods vehicles. Over the years many of the more traditional handling duties have been subsumed into the engineering trades but the flight decks of the Queen Elizabeth Class Carriers will once again see the Naval Airman Aircraft Handler in his element. The Aircraft Handler Association is one of the largest Fleet Air Arm Associations with over 1000 members.



Churchill's Influence

Winston Churchill took his first flight in an aeroplane in 1912 and was entranced. He loved it and was fascinated by every ingenious idea, immediately seeing the operational and strategic possibilities. He took every opportunity to fly with the young pioneers of the Royal Flying Corps and, as First Lord of the Admiralty at the time, soon became Naval aviation's most powerful and passionate sponsor and advocate. He is pictured with Lieutenant Thomas Scholes Creswell Royal Marines Light Infantry, a Flying Officer in the RFC Naval Wing who died on 4 June 1914 when his pusher bi-plane, a Wight 1914 Navyplane No 128, crashed in the Solent. The wings folded in flight at 100 feet and he and his passenger, Commander Arthur Rice, were both drowned.



Lynx in Record Drug Bust

The Fleet Air Arm is playing a vital role in counter narcotics operations and, in September 2009, a Lynx helicopter from 815 Naval Air Squadron was involved in a record breaking seizure of over five and a half tonnes of cocaine in an operation off the coast of South America.



The Lynx, deployed with the Type 23 Frigate HMS Iron Duke, spotted the 138ft converted fishing vessel MV Cristal acting suspiciously. Tracking the MV Cristal on radar and remaining covert the Lynx passed back vital information on the contact. Once in range HMS Iron Duke and the Lynx simultaneously closed on the vessel at speed with Royal Marines commando marksmen in the Lynx covering the MV Cristal with weapon systems.

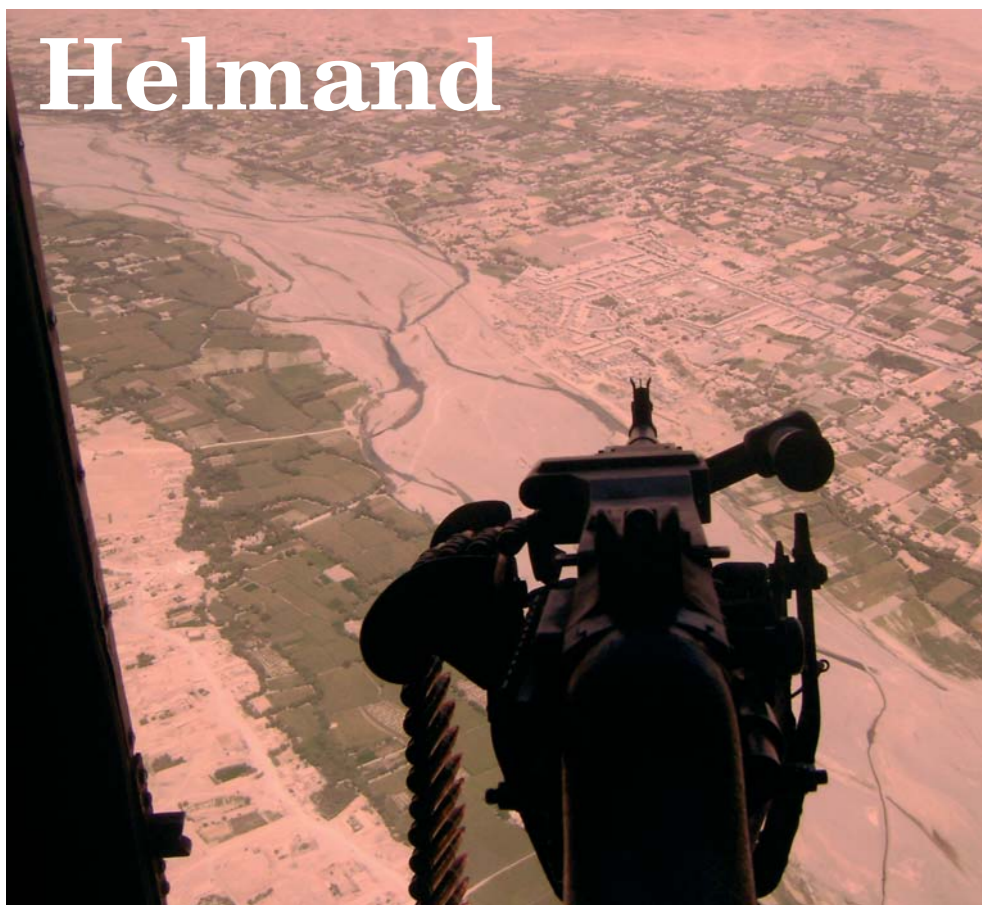
An extensive overnight search revealed the cocaine hidden under concrete in the vessel's ballast tanks. As the search continued through the following day the huge scale of the find became apparent – a total of 212 bales of cocaine weighing 26kg, each with a street value of £240 million, was discovered. The Minister for the Armed Forces praised the Lynx crew thanking them for the valuable work they do in keeping illegal drugs from entering the UK.

Q-Sight™ Helmet Mounted Display Systems for Naval Lynx Door Gunners



The Ministry of Defence has ordered 12 Q-Sight™ holographic helmet-mounted display units from BAE Systems to equip Naval door gunners on Lynx Mk 8s. The Q-Sight, which uses innovative holographic technology, provides the wearer with considerably enhanced vision. As well as having a night vision and binocular capability, the Q-Sight has been designed to be used in conjunction with the 0.50 cal machine gun thermal imaging sight as part of the Gunners Remote Sighting System. The monocular sight provides a heads-up display in front of the eyes showing bearing and speed of small targets and even moving video giving the wearer greatly increased situational awareness. The technology, which will go on trial with the Lynx Force in 2010, will also give Lynx door gunners complete freedom of movement to aim the gun with precision accuracy, including straight down.

Helmand



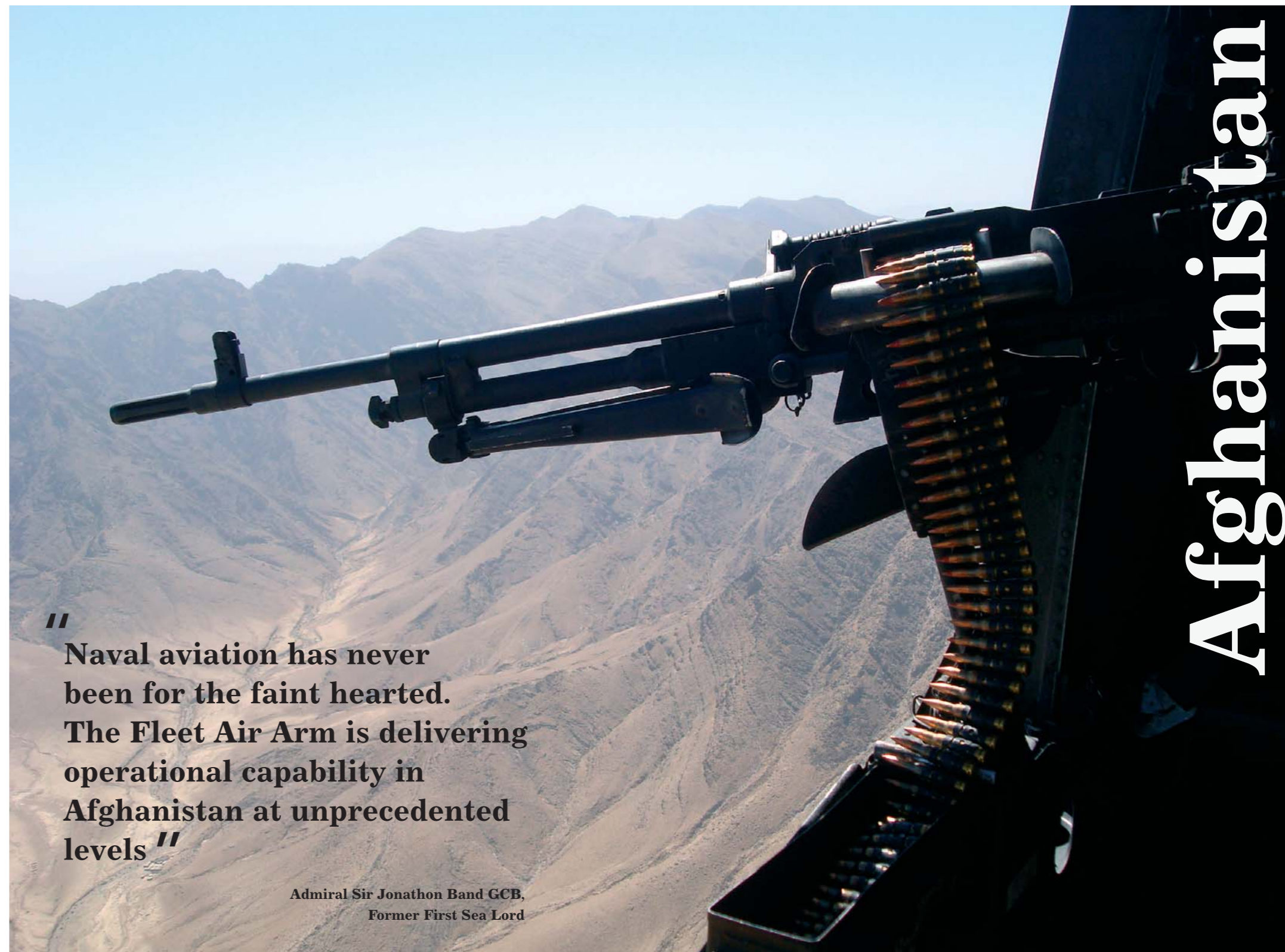
Afghanistan is one of the most demanding and dangerous aviation environments in the world. Elements of 845, 846 and 847 Naval Air Squadrons from the Commando Helicopter Force have been operating in Afghanistan since 2007 and their punishing routines continue to test both personnel and equipment in the most challenging conditions imaginable.

The Sea King Mk 4 aircraft currently in theatre are working in support of Regional Command (South) as well as providing direct support to UK Forces. Most missions are flown between the Forward Operating Bases in the volatile Helmand region 80 miles west of Kandahar. The intensity of operations over recent months has impacted hugely on both Squadrons but the Fleet Air Arm 'Junglies' have dealt with the pressure unerringly; their high serviceability levels, rapid response times and increased lift capability earning them the reputation that they can always be relied upon when it matters.

As well as epitomising the ultimate in flexibility, adaptability and utility, battlefield aviation often throws up highly unpredictable situations and a multiplicity of threats and dilemmas. The boundaries between traditional roles can also change rapidly. The capability to conduct an airborne assault one minute and swing into an Immediate Response Team for medical evacuation the next is indicative of the ubiquity, agility and versatility that Naval aviation is now called upon to provide.

"We honed our skills in Iraq" said Lieutenant Commander Gavin Simmonite of 846 Squadron "but in Afghanistan we have raised those skills to a whole new level. We are operating in an increasingly complex battlespace. The Sea King Mk 4s are a mission critical capability and everyone is supremely committed to the task."

During the Afghan elections, 845 and 846 Squadrons worked closely with the Afghan National Army to help the Afghans provide their own additional security. The road to a more stable Afghanistan, particularly in Helmand province, however, is still fraught with difficulties. In the past few months the Sea King Mk 4s have had a second General Purpose Machine Gun installed in the door to provide extra defence.



Afghanistan

" Naval aviation has never been for the faint hearted. The Fleet Air Arm is delivering operational capability in Afghanistan at unprecedented levels "

Admiral Sir Jonathon Band GCB,
Former First Sea Lord

Naval Airman Thomas Saunders has been recognised for his quick thinking and accurate response as a volunteer Sea King Air Door Gunner during operations with Special Forces in Helmand Province. Just as the Sea King was coming into land it came under close fire from the enemy. In this extremely vulnerable stage of flight, with enemy fire impacting the length of the aircraft, including immediately around his position, Naval Airman Saunders returned fire using his GPMG allowing vital seconds for the crew to evade contact. Rear Admiral Tony Johnstone-Burt OBE, Commander Joint Helicopter Command said "Naval Airman Saunders' quick, accurate and brave reactions certainly saved the potential loss of the aircraft and crew."



Air Door Gunner Praised for Saving Aircraft

Best Unit Award



The Commando Helicopter Force has been awarded 'Best Unit' award within the Joint Helicopter Command, an outstanding testament to the immense effort of the Fleet Air Arm Junglies and the contribution they are making in Afghanistan.

Captain Jon Pentreath (right), Commanding Officer of the Commando Helicopter Force was presented with the award by Rear Admiral Tony Johnstone-Burt OBE at a ceremony at the Museum of Army Flying at Middle Wallop. Speaking at the award ceremony Captain Pentreath said "To win this award in the face of such stiff competition is overwhelming. The Sea King is 40 years old and comes with a significant maintenance burden. It is only through dint of sheer hard work, considerable ingenuity, adherence to standards and Jungly cunning that Commando Helicopter Force personnel are continuing to deliver incredible levels of operational effectiveness in Afghanistan."



THE CHALLENGES

In order to operate in the demanding Afghan environment the Naval Sea King Mk 4 helicopters have been extensively modified. Carson rotor blades, a new tail rotor and new engines have been fitted to provide greater lift, and an upgraded defensive aids suite and significantly improved night flying system considerably enhance the overall capability of the aircraft. Nevertheless, the talcum powder like dust, pitch black nights and extreme



variations in temperature present considerable challenges. In temperatures of over 40°C the metal airframes become extremely hot. Within seconds of entering an aircraft, aircrew are completely soaked in sweat. Carrying out even simple repairs becomes extremely difficult. Maintainers can only operate in an aircraft for about twenty minutes before they need to recover and re-hydrate. Diagnosing a fault and finding the part and the right tool to fix it become real challenges requiring ever greater levels of intellectual agility and lateral thinking. Combined with the daily dangers faced by the crews particularly when carrying out tasking for Regional Command (South), the demands on the aircraft and personnel of the Fleet Air Arm in Afghanistan are some of the most challenging the Navy has faced in over 60 years.

Halton Apprentices Naval Wing Association

The Halton Apprentices Naval Wing Association has been especially proud to have been a part of this year's Centenary celebrations. The Halton Apprentices go back to 1938, when the Fleet Air Arm of the RAF returned to Admiralty control and the Royal Navy needed to start its own aircraft maintenance branch.

In the early days of the Naval Air Service the aircraft were maintained by RAF mechanics. In 1938 the Navy did not have the facility to train its own aircraft artificers so the Admiralty agreed with the Air Ministry for this training to be carried out at RAF Halton, Buckinghamshire. 500 Halton Naval Apprentices were trained between 1938 and 1942 and 160 RAF apprentices voluntarily transferred to the Royal Navy while serving there.

"Such was the high standard of the Halton product that a large number of 'Halton Brats' as they were called went on to become Chief Artificers or Chief and Petty Officer Air Fitters forming a hard core of highly qualified technicians, vital to the maintenance of aircraft operating in a rigorous environment," said Chairman of the

Association, Frank Ayling. "The apprentices were pitched straight in at the deep end during World War II. The war was a rapid learning atmosphere and many went on to become Air Engineering Officers."

The Halton Apprentices Naval Wing held their first reunion in 1969. "We have had many reunions since but the youngest Halton Apprentice is 84 and the oldest is 91 so we are getting on in age now," said Frank.

This year members of the Association attended the service at St Paul's and the Royal Garden Party, where four members were presented to HRH The Duke of York. "We also recently visited the Fleet Air Arm Museum and spoke to the Archivists about our history," said Frank.



Sadly, six months after passing out from Halton, 17 Apprentices from part of the first entry (35th) lost their lives when HMS Glorious was sunk off Norway. Their names are inscribed on the Fleet Air Arm memorial at Lee-on-Solent and in the Fleet Air Arm Roll of Honour.



Met is Crucial

Accurate weather forecasting is a fundamental factor in all operations and in air operations it is absolutely crucial. From early airship operations defending Britain from enemy air raids to avoiding sand storms in Iraq and Afghanistan, Naval aviators have depended on Royal Navy Meteorologists for the operational effectiveness and safety of almost every mission.

Although there is evidence of 'weathermen' going further back than 1909, it was not until the Royal Navy took delivery of 'Mayfly' and started taking a keen interest in flying that they became an integral part of the Service. By 1914 a fledgling Naval Met Service was formed at RNAS Kingsnorth in Kent to provide weather information for airships. By 1918 the Navy was providing met forecasting information to 40 Royal Naval Air Stations. Measures to protect operational security and protect the secrecy of the forecasts were also introduced. A special met cipher was used to encrypt messages and forecasts were sent several times a day.

Today the Royal Navy Met branch is an integral part of the Hydrographic branch providing met to all three Services. If you are a former METOC why not meet up with old friends and join Cloud Observers. Cloud Observers was formed in 2005 and is a member of the Fly Navy Federation.

www.cloudobservers.co.uk

Buccaneer Association aims to raise £2000 for upkeep of Memorial

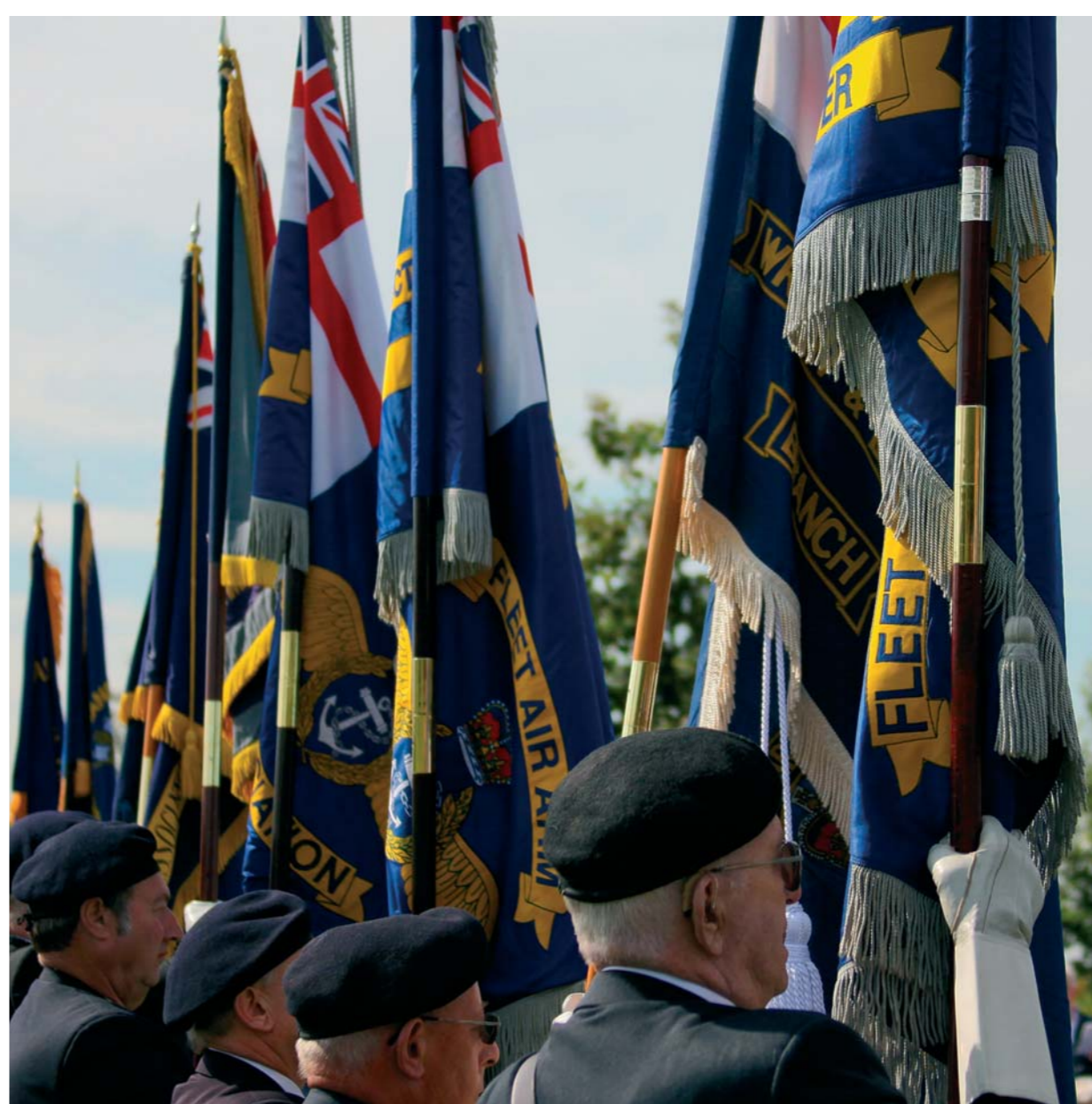
The Buccaneer Association is hoping to raise £2,000 to start a trust fund for the upkeep of the Fleet Air Arm Memorial at the National Arboretum.

"We have already raised £800 from sales of Fleet Air Arm Centenary Whisky" said Association Chairman, Brian Stanley. "The Association is a founder member of the Fly Navy Federation and we want to continue to support the work of the Federation and ensure that the Fleet Air Arm memorial is immaculately maintained for future generations."

The Buccaneer Association was formed in 2001 to reunite anyone who has served in a Fleet Air Arm Buccaneer Squadron. The Association has over 600 members and meets every year. Last year the Association visited Bruntingthorpe airfield to see Buccaneer 020 painted in 809 colours and in 2012 the Association is planning to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the decommissioning of HMS Fulmar with a reunion dinner at Lossiemouth. To join the Buccaneer Association please visit our website www.faaba.co.uk or tel. 01935 474862.

Channel Dash Memorial

Operation Fuller, the daring Channel Dash in which 825 Naval Air Squadron with just six Fairey Swordfish attempted to stop the passage of the German Battlefleet as they dashed through the Dover Straits in 1942 is to be remembered with a substantial permanent memorial to be unveiled at Ramsgate Harbour on 12 February 2010. A second memorial to commemorate personnel and units from all three armed services who took part in Operation Fuller will be placed in Granville Gardens, Dover and will be unveiled in 2012, the 70th anniversary of the Channel Dash.



Fleet Air Arm Memorial

Three Harrier GR9s flying fast and low paid an immaculate and fitting tribute at a ceremony to dedicate the new Fleet Air Arm Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire on 11 September 2009.

Situated close to the Armed Forces Memorial, the new Fleet Air Arm Memorial is a magnificent granite aircraft carrier on a plinth of Portland stone with Fleet Air Arm wings beautifully inscribed beneath the bow.

During the service the Chaplain of the Fleet, the Venerable John Green QHC, gave thanks for the courage, skill and sacrifice of the men and women of the Royal Naval Air Service and Fleet Air Arm

who died in the service of their country and said that the new memorial would serve as a permanent reminder of their selfless commitment for generations to come.

The day was an exceptional autumn day with a brilliant blue sky and, falling on the anniversary of the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, the ceremony had a heightened poignancy which was felt by many. As the memorial was unveiled and The Last Post sounded recent losses in Afghanistan were also remembered.

Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, Rear Admiral Fleet Air Arm inspected the Guard from HMS Sultan, and the smartly turned out Fleet Air Arm Standard Bearers. The service was followed by a lunchtime reception for 500 guests including Admiral of the Fleet, Sir Benjamin Bathurst, and representatives from all the Fleet Air Arm Associations.



Battle Honours Japan 1945

Nine surviving members of 1772 Naval Air Squadron formed in May 1944 held their annual reunion at the Unicorn Hotel, Stow-on-the-Wold on 6 October 2009. 1772 Squadron was one of three Fleet Air Arm Firefly Squadrons deployed to Sydney, Australia. The Squadron was then embarked in HMS Indefatigable for strikes against the Japanese mainland. Speaking after the Squadron reunion, Donald Randle said, "I was only 20 at the time and I remember having my 21st birthday party in Sydney just after the war. It was quite a run ashore! Our dinner at the Unicorn was a great success. We raffled one of the splendid Fly Navy 100 Centenary plates and raised £105 which we donated to the Fly Navy Heritage Trust."





Looking to The Future

The Fleet Air Arm is in a pivotal position for the future. As well as being the clear UK lead for all aspects of shipborne and carrier aviation operations, the Fleet Air Arm has also proved itself time and time again in supporting land operations and being able to integrate seamlessly into Joint Force organisations and the broader military aviation effort. As well as playing a full part in current operations and deployments the Fleet Air Arm is keeping a very clear eye on where it is heading.

As a distinctive seaborne Fighting Arm, the Fleet Air Arm will play a key role in the introduction into service of the two Queen Elizabeth Class Aircraft Carriers – HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales – which, together with their embarked squadrons of F-35 Joint Combat Aircraft, Merlin helicopters and Maritime Air Surveillance Capability (MASC) aircraft will deliver a formidable Joint Defence capability – Carrier Strike.

The Queen Elizabeth Class Aircraft Carriers will be the largest warships ever built for the Royal Navy and it is fitting testament to the

enduring capability of carrier aviation that the cutting of steel for the first of the two new carriers, HMS Queen Elizabeth, took place during the Centenary year of Naval aviation, on 7 July 2009 at Govan. The build, which includes sub contracts with 57 companies, is now making significant progress at five different shipyards around the UK.

Equally as fitting in this Centenary year, the first prototype F-35B Lightning stealth fighter is preparing to carry out early hover and vertical landing trials in the US and a further three F-35B jets are nearing

completion for System Design and Demonstration.

In an increasingly uncertain world, the UK's ability to protect its interests thousands of miles from UK shores and airfields is fundamental to national and global security and our ability to Strike with Global Reach remains at the heart of national defence policy. The aircraft carrier with its Carrier Air Group is the lynchpin of expeditionary capability, enabling the UK to deter aggression and deliver combat winning effect wherever and whenever it chooses.

Unmanned Aviation Systems



The potential of remotely piloted aircraft or Unmanned Air Systems (UAS) is being rapidly realised. They have already proved highly effective in land operations and the case for their use in the maritime domain is gathering momentum.

A Reaper UAS, operated by a Royal Navy crew has had two successful Hellfire strikes in direct support to ground units under fire. The Royal Navy is also actively exploring the use of UAS at sea. Operating UAS from warships is seen as a significant future capability, particularly where host nation support is not readily available or negotiable.

“UAS can be operated from a variety of ships and can reduce the risk to manned aircraft by flying in the more hazardous environments,” said Lieutenant Commander Trevor Steele. “Maritime UAS will be a flexible and complimentary addition to manned aircraft, offering range, endurance and the ability to present a more benign or covert presence in sensitive areas.”

Maritime Surveillance and Control

HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales are in build and on track to becoming world class aircraft carriers. However, they will not deliver Carrier Strike capability on their own. One of the three key components of Carrier Strike will be the Maritime Airborne Surveillance Capability (MASC).

Initially this will be provided by the Sea King ASaC Mk 7s currently providing critical Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) information in Afghanistan. As the carriers come into service, however, the Sea Kings will be replaced by a new airframe with a highly sophisticated and enhanced long range and wide area surveillance system providing the essential ‘Eyes of the Fleet’. Airborne surveillance and reconnaissance is as vital today as it was in the early days of Naval aviation nearly 100 years ago. Networked ISTAR is a core maritime role and a key enabler for the Carrier Strike and Littoral Manoeuvre Task Groups.

This increased gathering, managing and sharing of the battlespace picture and networking of sensors, information and command systems will not only lead to more effective and responsive targeting but

empower commanders at all levels in rapid informed decision making. However, generating this technically innovative pan defence capability will not be without its difficulties. The Fleet Air Arm is already preparing and training personnel in this highly skilled area, growing air minded mariners and gleaning best practice from across the other Services and coalition partners, so that they can apply maritime and military skills to best effect.

“To put the step change of capability into perspective”, said Lieutenant Commander Andrew Rose, “HMS Queen Elizabeth, with her Carrier borne MASC airborne sensors, will be able to ‘see’ and operate in a completely autonomous manner world-wide, at an extended range from the Carrier Task Group.” An announcement on the winning solution for the MASC contract is expected in the New Year.

Delivering the future of naval air power.



The F-35B Short Take Off/Vertical Landing (STOVL) Lightning is set to transform UK defence aviation, replacing the Harrier GR7/9s in a paradigm shift providing a formidable element of future Carrier Strike capability.

There are currently four F-35B jets nearing completion for System Design and Demonstration, with the first of these, BF-1 preparing to conduct its first hover and vertical landing trials at Naval Air Station Patuxent River in the United States early in the New Year.

The F-35 Lightning is a fifth generation fighter, combining advanced stealth technology with fighter speed and agility and highly sophisticated sensor information. “It is a highly capable, complex aircraft” said Lieutenant Commander Uvedale Wood. “Introducing the Lightning into service will be both exciting and challenging.”

The aircraft will be flown by Royal Navy and Royal Air Force pilots both from the Carriers and Deployed Operating Bases ashore. “The first three pilots will begin training for the Test and Evaluation Squadron in April 2011,” said Lieutenant Commander Wood. “Following successful Operational Test and Evaluation the Operational Conversion Unit will form in the US, later transferring to the UK, based at RAF Lossiemouth. While Lockheed Martin continues the process of validating the revolutionary STOVL propulsion system in the US, trials are also well advanced at the Maritime Integration and Support Centre at Portsmouth. Avionics de-risking activities are also proving invaluable” said Lieutenant Commander Wood.

Two separate, interchangeable F-35 engines are under development, the Pratt and Whitney F135 and the GE Rolls Royce Fighter Engine F136.



Wildcat makes first flight

The new Lynx Wildcat helicopter made its first flight on 12 November 2009 over the Agusta Westland site at Yeovil. The aircraft, which will be manufactured in battlefield and maritime variants will be the most advanced and capable helicopter in its class. 28 Wildcat have been ordered for the Royal Navy with the first aircraft expected to be delivered in December 2012. The aircraft made its debut flight in Army markings and the Army expects to take delivery of the first battlefield variant in 2014. As the airframes of the two variants are common, aircrew and maintainers from both Services will train in a Joint Conversion Unit to be established at RNAS Yeovilton.



Naval Strike Wing



30 members of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators (GAPAN) recently visited the Naval Strike Wing at RAF Cottesmore. The Naval Strike Wing is an affiliated unit of the Guild and among the visitors were Group Captain Tom Eeles, pictured, who flew Buccaneers with 801 Squadron in HMS Victorious from 1966-68 and Mr Terry Rawlins whose son, Lieutenant Simon Rawlins serves with the Naval Strike Wing. Lieutenant Rawlins briefed the GAPAN visitors on the capabilities of the Harrier, its weapon systems and tactics from high speed low level over-flights to a bomb strike. The Guild visitors were then given instruction in the simulator and invited to carry out a ski-jump launch, circuit the ship and make a vertical deck landing. Some successful landings were achieved but many ended in spectacular disaster – names protected to save embarrassment! “Finally, with maximum ship pitch and roll selected, Si Rawlins showed us how to do it with consummate ease,” said Tom Eeles. “It was a fascinating and extremely informative visit”.

Harriers of the Naval Strike Wing embarked in HMS Illustrious were the centre of attention at the Fly Navy 100 celebrations in Liverpool.

Over the past five years the Naval Strike Wing has been deployed on Close Air Support Operations in Afghanistan but this year the Force has embarked on a period of regenerating many of the old skills of operating on land and at sea. Commanding Officer of the Naval Strike Wing, Commander David Lindsay said “Our experience in Afghanistan has made us a very capable combat team where we operated extremely successfully in the Close Air Support role. The challenge now is to build on this experience to be in a position to be ready for whatever the future brings.”

During Exercise Joint Warrior in October 2009 the Squadron embarked 6 Harrier GR7 and GR9 aircraft in HMS Illustrious integrating the jets into a challenging programme of simulated Carrier Strike



operations, hitting numerous enemy targets ashore whilst also conducting Close Air Support missions in support of Land Forces and carrying out a period of live bombing delivering 1000lb bombs. “We are enjoying being back at sea again” said Commander Lindsay “and we are looking forward to re-embarking in HMS Ark Royal early in 2010.”



All Round Contribution to Fixed Wing Aviation

Harrier pilot, Lieutenant Simon Rawlins, who has served on five tours in Afghanistan and flown 193 operational missions, has been awarded the Cobham Trophy for his all round contribution to Royal Navy fixed wing aviation.

Lieutenant Rawlins, who has become known as the public face of the young Joint Fighter pilot, is the first recipient of the new award presented to the Fleet Air Arm during the Centenary year by Cobham Aviation Services Division. As the Naval Strike Wing Qualified Warfare Instructor (QWI), Lieutenant Rawlins was responsible

for the introduction of the Paveway IV bomb into operational use. With many missions in Afghanistan ‘Danger Close’, he was also commended for his decisive skill in saving the lives of troops in contact, maintaining morale and setting a superb example to his younger team in a highly challenging environment.

Pride of Britain Award for Bravery

Petty Officer Air Engineering Technician Martin Langlands has been honoured with a Pride of Britain Award for his bravery in saving a family from a multiple pile-up on the M5. Petty Officer Langlands, based at RNAS Yeovilton on 702 Squadron, risked his life to bring the terrified parents and their children to safety when their car suffered a blow out and smashed into a motorway central reservation. With no thought for his own safety Martin ran across the busy motorway in darkness, with cars passing at 70 mph, to get to the stricken family. Petty Officer Langlands was presented with his outstanding bravery award from Sir Michael Caine at the Daily Mirror Pride of Britain Awards in October.



Fly Navy Federation

The Fly Navy Federation is the umbrella organisation within which the Fleet Air Arm Associations are able to maintain contact with each other, have their voices heard collectively and assist each other when necessary.

As an alliance of Associations, it represents a formidable wealth of knowledge and experience which, this year in particular, has proved an invaluable support to the current serving Fleet Air Arm in helping to promote the Centenary.

Chairman of the Federation, Admiral Chris Clayton said “The Fly Navy Federation maintains the autonomy of each association but allows us to work towards a common goal and speak with one voice. Our aim is to keep the Fleet Air Arm at the forefront of public awareness as we

approach the introduction into service of the Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers.” Admiral Clayton continued. “I am enormously impressed by the way in which the different Associations help and support each other. In recent years the Telegraphist Air Gunners Association has found it increasingly difficult to organise their annual memorial service at Lee-on-Solent but next year, in the true spirit of the Fleet Air Arm, the Aircrewmans Association has stepped in and offered to run it for them.”

VC Winners Honoured

A brass plaque dedicated to the memory of the four Fleet Air Arm Victoria Cross Winners was unveiled during a service in St Bart’s in October to celebrate 100 years of Naval aviation. The Fleet Air Arm church at RNAS Yeovilton, part of the Fly Navy Heritage Trust, has also undergone a period of refurbishment including a new floor and a rededicated Medieval altar. The church is the spiritual home of the Fleet Air Arm and many Naval aviators are buried in the peaceful tranquillity of the cemetery garden.



New CO for Fleet Air Arm Squadron

Sea Vixen pilot, Michael Ryan took command of the Fleet Air Arm Squadron from Michael Bonham-Cozens at the Squadron annual dinner at HMS Collingwood in November. Michael, who flew Sea Venoms and was a Sea Vixen instructor, also led the promotion team for Fred’s Five displays.

“The Fleet Air Arm Squadron has 100 members many of whom own or charter their own aircraft” said Michael. “The Squadron links former, current and future Naval aviators in a shared love of Naval flying.”

One of the principal aims of the Squadron is to introduce young people to aviation. The Squadron provides air experience flights and gliding course for Sea Cadets and actively supports the work of 727 Squadron in attracting young pilots towards careers in Navy aviation. “We are passionate advocates of the Fly Navy brand” said Michael. “We also have an annual programme of visits to military establishments and airfields and support the RN Historic Flight.” Current serving Naval aviators who feel they can contribute are encouraged to join. Michael.ryan@LRgroup.co.uk



Proud to support Royal Navy flying training



One of the aims of this year’s Centenary has been to educate young people in our Naval aviation ethos and heritage and to give Sea Cadets, School Combined Cadet Force Units and University Royal Navy Units the opportunity to fly with a Naval Air Squadron and focus their ambition in joining the Fleet Air Arm as a career.

The initiative, which is part of the Navy Board’s wider youth agenda, has been very successful. Over 500 Cadets have flown with 727 Naval Air Squadron at RNAS Yeovilton over the Centenary year gaining an exciting insight into Naval flying and life in a Naval Air Squadron.



Simon Wrey and Charles Hensher, above, members of Sherborne School Combined Cadet Force attended an Air Experience Day with 727 Squadron in November. “We had a brilliant day” said Simon. “We flew in a Grob 115e, a training aircraft with dual controls. Our instructor carried out aerobatic manoeuvres including loops and barrel rolls and we were able to take the controls during the flight. We flew over Sherborne School which was amazing to see from the air. It was a pretty intensive day but great fun and we came away really impressed by the Fleet Air Arm.” Simon is a member of the Royal Marines section of Sherborne School CCF and is keen to join the Royal Marines as a Commando Surgeon.

Commanding Officer of 727 Squadron, Lieutenant Commander Kevin Potts said “This year’s Centenary has been an outstanding opportunity for us to raise the profile of Naval aviation and give young people the opportunity to experience the spirit and ethos of Naval flying. In partnership with our contracted flying training provider, VT Group, we have flown over 2000 flying hours and run 45 Air Experience Courses, double the number we have run in previous years, giving potential recruits from as young as 13 a chance to spend time with us and consider flying with the Navy as a career. We are in effect the front door of Naval aviation. All Royal Navy pilots carry out their pilot grading with us and every pilot in the Navy passes through the Squadron.”

Communications Director for Fly Navy 100, Commander Sue Eagles said, “It takes many years to train a Naval pilot. The fast jet pilots who will fly from the new aircraft carriers are still at school at the moment but the Fleet Air Arm needs to start recruiting them over the next few years.”

Cobham Trophy



Centenary Dinner

10 December 2009



Old Royal Naval College



The Royal Navy marked the end of the Centenary year with a magnificent Dinner in the Painted Hall at the Old Royal Naval College Greenwich on 10 December 2009. Distinguished guests included Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales, The Duke of York, The Princess Royal and Prince Michael of Kent together with senior representatives from Government, business and industry. The dinner was hosted by the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope KBC OBE.

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The Fleet Air Arm Officers Association

200 members and guests of the Fleet Air Arm Officers' Association remembered the Falklands campaign and the Battle of Taranto with a formal dinner in the Great Hall of Lincoln's Inn on 11 November 2009. Guests included Sir George Martin, Admiral Sir Jonathon Band GCB, Dr Julian Lewis MP, Conservative Shadow Defence Minister, and former President of the Association, Admiral Sir Raymond Lygo KCB.

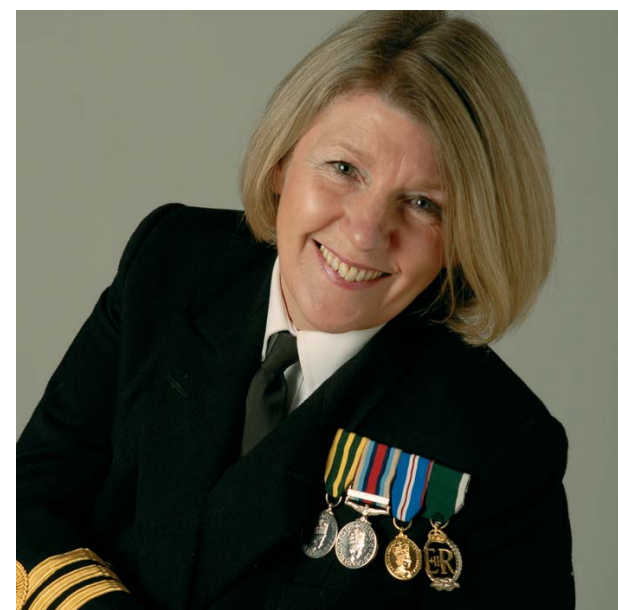
The Association has over 2500 members drawn from every part of Naval aviation including members who served in the earliest days of the Naval Air Service and officers flying the high performance aircraft of today's Fleet Air Arm.

Speaking at the dinner, Chairman of the Association, Rear Admiral Scott Lidbetter spoke of the work of the Association in promoting the Fleet Air Arm, supporting Naval Aviation Heritage and encouraging young people to join the RN through the Sea Cadets. He also highlighted the lasting legacy of the two Fleet Air Arm memorials, one on the Embankment in London and the other at the National Memorial Arboretum. "The Fleet Air

Arm had a splendid turn out at the Remembrance Service at the Cenotaph this year. Over 300 Fleet Air Arm veterans also laid wreaths around the Fleet Air Arm memorial on the Embankment."

Members of the Association meet regularly to renew and maintain lifelong friendships forged in the service. The Association office is located in the Naval and Military Club in St James's Square and the club generously allows members to enjoy concessionary rates. Officers of all specialisations are eligible to join.

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Editor's Note

This year's Centenary has been highly successful in raising awareness of Naval aviation in the public eye, renewing our links with the Fleet Air Arm Associations and strengthening relationships with our many stakeholders, supporters and affiliations in the wider business and aviation community. With such a small team, the organisational and communications challenges have been enormous, particularly set against the intensity of current operations and a news agenda dominated by the banking crisis, but the outpouring of goodwill and support especially from past and present serving members and the wide-ranging interest shown in the Fleet Air Arm has made it a truly memorable year. So much has been achieved this year that cannot be allowed to slip away.

Commander Sue Eagles
Communications Director
Fly Navy 100

BEYOND FLY NAVY 100

Sustaining the Momentum of Fly Navy 100

The Fly Navy 100 team disbanded in December 2009 following a highly successful Centenary year. The birth of Naval aviation in 1909, however, was only the beginning, and over the following years there will be successive Centenaries and Anniversaries of the achievements in the development of Naval flying. For information on the Fleet Air Arm and how to support our Naval aviation heritage, including the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Taranto, the dedication of The Channel Dash Memorial and the 70th Anniversary of RNAS Yeovilton in 2010, contact Commander Robin Wain Royal Navy, Navy Command Headquarters, Leach Building, Whale Island, Portsmouth PO2 8BY Tel: 02392 625678 or Email: robin.wain537@mod.uk



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