

Issue No.120



Winter 2016/2017



Tandem Hang Glide - page 8,9 & 10

BRITISH WOMEN PILOTS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



PARAGLIDING IN NEPAL



CHIPPY PILOT



AMY JOHNSON MEMORIAL

WHO'S WHO IN THE BWPA

COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Chair: Julie Westthorp

Vice Chair: Marion Wooldridge

Hon. Secretary & Archivist: Beverley Harrison

Hon. Treasurer: Nicky Rowan

Membership Secretary: Lesley Runnalls

Newsletter Editor & Events

Coordinator: Rosemary Clemo

Ambassador: Pauline Vahey

Communications and Marketing:
Annabel Cook

Careers and FEWP Representative:
Sharon Nicholson

Events Coordinator: Cheryl Sullivan

WORKING OFF-COMMITTEE

Website: Amy Chau

Auditor: Position Vacant

Training Advisor: Dorothy Saul-Pooley

Newsletter Editor: Keith Clemo

Sales: Susan Gadsby

STEM Coordinator: Capt. Cat Burton

AIMS OF THE BWPA:

To promote practical schemes to assist women to gain flying licences of all types.

To advise women on the training required and the openings available to them in aviation.

To enable women in aviation to meet and exchange information of mutual interest.

British Women Pilots' Association
White Waltham Airfield
Waltham Road
Maidenhead
Berks, SL6 3NJ
www.bwpa.co.uk

We'd really love to share your stories, experiences and ideas with other BWPA members in the next newsletter. So, if you'd like to contribute please email your articles and high resolution photographs to the editor at newsletter@bwpa.co.uk



A: 1 Moors Farm Cottages, Marsh Road,
Outwell, Wisbech, Norfolk, PE14 8PW, UK
T: +44 (0)1945 772 803
E: info@rmedia-communications.co.uk
W: rmedia-communications.co.uk

While every effort is made to ensure accuracy, no responsibility can be accepted for inaccuracies, however caused. No liability can be accepted for illustrations, photographs, artwork or advertising materials whilst in transmission, with the publisher, or their agents. All information is correct at time of going to print. © R Media & Communications Ltd



CONTENTS

Chairman's comment.....4

BWPA news5

Event reports6

Pooleys (ADVERT) 14

Future events 16

Book review 'Wonderful Adversity - Into Africa' 17

Gender differences in flying training..... 18

My flying life - paragliding..... 20

From the archives - Sheila Scott 22

Obituary Molly Rose OBE..... 24

Flying in Germany..... 25

My job in aviation 28

Forthcoming events..... 31

DISCOUNT FOR OLDER MEMBERS:

Don't forget that the BWPA offers a discount on membership to those aged over 80 years. Please advise the Membership Secretary by emailing her at membership@bwpa.co.uk.

BWPA COMMITTEE DATES:

Saturdays March 25th at White Waltham, May 13th, July 22nd, September 23rd from 10.00 to 15.00, with lunch. Please contact chairman@bwpa.co.uk to attend, or send a query or suggestion.



CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

Julie Westthorp



Happy New Year and I hope you've all had a good Christmas. For those of you who attended the AGM and Christmas Lunch, it was lovely to see so many familiar faces and some new ones, and I hope you all enjoyed the venue. I'm sure we will see more about the awards presentations to our very worthy recipients and the appointment of our first Patron, Dr Stuart Smith, in future newsletters.

The last quarter of 2016 continued to see much activity for the committee and our work with the Aviatrix Project and STEMnet, so hopefully we are getting the message out into the wider public that women fly!

I was a keynote speaker at the Royal Aeronautical Society conference regarding the future shortfall of pilots globally and this was an interesting and encouraging two days. Unfortunately there are still misconceptions regarding women and commercial flying but overall there is a positive move towards negating the gender bias. The conference let me raise the profile of the BWPA and the work we are doing to encourage young women to consider a career in aviation; also to highlight at what a young age gender bias is formed regarding careers. Our close links with easyJet continue and we have been involved in a further training day for their pilots encouraging them in outreach work to schools and young people, working in partnership with the BWPA and the Aviatrix Project.

Hopefully many of you will have seen press coverage of the 'plane naming' ceremony at Luton on 15th December to celebrate recruiting 12% of female pilots. I was privileged to be a speaker, with Dame Carolyn McCall, regarding our partnership in working with young people, especially girls.

In November, Marion and I were invited to Bristol Ground School to observe the Wings Alliance airline selection day. It gave us insights into the airline selection process and we look forward to closer working in the future. Links will be posted on our website for people interested in pursuing a career in commercial aviation via the modular route.

2017 is looking positive with forthcoming events so I hope to see you at some of these. Encourage fellow pilots to join our association so that we can maintain the momentum in supporting women in aviation through our work with young people and our scholarships.

This year will also see us move towards becoming a Company Limited by Guarantee, as agreed at the AGM, which will give all of our members more security and hopefully encourage wider organisations to join us.

I wish you all a Happy New Year and Happy Flying.

BWPA NEWS

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Abigail Cooper
(London)

Lauren Richardson
(Honiton, Devon)

Alexandria Akiunor
(Maidenhead, Berks)

Joanne Pullen
(North Scarle, Lincolnshire)

Corinne Dennis
(Liskeard, Cornwall)

Patricia Porter
(Rugby, Warwickshire)

Captain Kate McWilliams
(Carlisle)

Captain Ayla Holdom
(Blandford Forum, Dorset)

Mrs Amy Packe
(Oxhill, Warwickshire)

Ms Jill Tushingham
(North Yorkshire)

Mrs Mary Meagher
(Oxford)

Dr Gillian Grafton
(Wolverhampton)

Mrs Marie Banks
(Bristol)

Miss Zoe Burnett
(Aberdeen, Scotland)

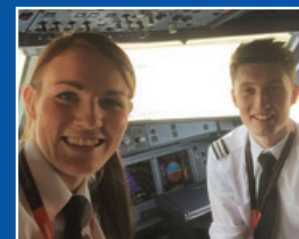
Captain Suzanne Freeman
(Bedfordshire)

Mrs Claire Hatton
(Cheshire)

Dr Stuart Smith
(Bedford)

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

- Annabel Cook, now Communications Manager at Old Sarum Airfield.
- Pauline Vahey and Cherry Charters, who won the autumn book competition.
- Ann Brown and Zara van Zyl, who went solo in 2016.
- Catherine Emmett, who gained her PPL in November.
- Sarah Muscat, starting a type rating on B717's with Spanish company Vototea.
- Kate McWilliams, aged 26, easyJet's youngest lady captain, pictured here with Luke Elsworth, at 19 the UK's youngest commercial pilot.
- Sacha Dench, who used a paramotor to follow migrating swans from Russia to Slimbridge.
- Karen Cox and Claire Whitewho learnt to fly in 2016 with FSDP scholarships.



ENQUIRY:

In 1995, Sue Hull, now living in Texas, flew Rockwell Commander G-IMPX to Old Warden for a Women's Fly-In. She has lost her copy of the TV programme made then. Can anybody tell Sue how to find one? Contact her via the newsletter.

APOLOGIES TO:

Bettina Bejaj, whose name was spelt incorrectly in the autumn newsletter.

EVENT REPORTS

Rosemary Clemo

TOP NAV 2016



Keith and I took part in Top Nav North at Conington. As this area was new for us, we made a preliminary trip to check out the circuit, and studied charts, maps and 'Google Earth'. Fog being forecast for Saturday, we arrived on Friday and stayed in a hotel. Next day despite lingering mist, six crews assembled for briefing, where the route with all way points was displayed to us. We could use planning tools such as 'Sky Demon' but were not to follow GPS in the air.

We had an hour to prepare and eat, everything at the airfield café being free to competitors. Planning by old fashioned 'whizzy wheel' and recording the information on the required form took all our time. We wished that we had used 'Sky Demon' and then transferred the information to the official form. We also wished we had taken our 250000 map. After a group photo we left at five minute intervals, the fastest aircraft taking off first. Aircraft carried GPS trackers whilst pilots photographed each waypoint. The rally

began at Alconbury disused airfield. It tracked to Littleport on the Great Ouse. Oh no, Ely was ahead! We adjusted our track before we reached Mildenhall's airspace. The next leg was our worst: We miss-read a heading and found ourselves approaching RAF Marham (luckily closed for the weekend) rather than North Pickenham disused. Having found Pickenham, we then failed to identify the next waypoint, a road junction south of The Wash, but Hunstanton lighthouse was easily recognised. From here we turned south to a road bridge at Downham Market and a railway bridge over a canal. We returned after an exhilarating flight, knowing we had not done well.

But we DID enjoy doing 'Top Nav' and we WOULD recommend it to other pilots. Top Nav will take place on Saturday May 6th 2017 at the same venues as last year: White Waltham, Goodwood, Bodmin and Conington. **Details and booking forms from the BWPA website or from www.rin.org.uk/events.**



JOIN BWPA

Full membership of BWPA is open to women with pilot's licences, and to aircrew holding appropriate licences. Associate membership is available to women in training and to men and women interested in furthering the aims of BWPA.

To join, use the form on our website at
bwpa.co.uk/membership
 or contact our membership secretary at
membership@bwpa.co.uk



> EVENT REPORTS CONT.

LAA RALLY- SEPTEMBER



Awet, windy September adversely affected the LAA Rally, Croft Farm Scout Air Camp, and Redhill fly-in. At the Women's Ballooning Weekend at Fimmere, Buckinghamshire, only four balloons were able to fly. At Herne Bay, several BWPA members attended the unveiling of a statue of Amy Johnson, by HRH Prince Michael of Kent and Tracey Curtis-Taylor. Aerobatics pilot Lauren Richardson flew a Pitts Special in a breathtaking solo display. *The photos show Candida Atkins and Julie Westhorp with 'Amy Johnson', some women pilot guests, and Julie with HRH Prince Michael of Kent.*

> EVENT REPORTS CONT.

VISIT TO DARLEY MOOR

Amy Chau

On October 8th, six BWPA members and friends met at Darley Moor for a microlight and hang gliding day. Amy shared a tandem hang glider with multiple world-record holder, Judy Leden.



Hang Gliding has been on my wish list for a long time so I was excited to hear that Judy Leden had offered to host a taster day in Darley Moor Airfield in April 2016. Sadly the weather was poor so the event was cancelled. I was delighted when Rosemary managed to re-arrange with Judy to host it again on 8th October. Since Ashbourne is a beautiful area, I booked an overnight B&B. Weather was slightly uncertain the day before but I hoped there would be a window to get airborne. It turned out to be too windy for paragliding but the wind, scattered cloud and clear visibility were great for hang gliding.

I got there early in time to join the briefing of another lady before my flight. She was very excited and got

herself wrapped up well for the occasion. When she returned, there was a big smile on her face. As I had done the briefing already, I felt at home when it was my turn. With Judy's experience and calmness, I was totally relaxed while preparing for the takeoff as well as throughout the whole flight. Judy was quite pleased to take a smaller mass like me for a change. With minimum weight to carry, we were off the ground less than two seconds after rolling. It felt unusually quiet without a roaring engine noise on takeoff. We went up to three thousand feet before we were released and I felt a sudden jerk followed by silence. There was a sense of liberation and freedom.

Judy showed me how to locate a thermal and make turns with body movement. Surprisingly a gentle ...>



body wriggle produced an impressive turning effect: No balance ball or turn coordinator to check. Shift the body weight forward and the altitude changes: No altimeter to check. Judy brought no instruments as they often cause unnecessary distraction. Her senses and skills were truly amazing. When I saw cloud ahead of us, my instinct was to move away but Judy led us straight through it. She raised her hand and told me to touch it and feel it. My immediate reaction was to take a deep breath to inhale as much as I can and wave my hand with delight. I could not help showing a big smile and took a selfie of Judy and me. This brought back my childhood dream when I thought clouds in the sky must be like cotton wool or marshmallow. It was incredible that we stayed level for such a long time purely due to the thermal. After visiting Judy's favorite thermal over a brown field, she prepared to land. She made some body weight shifts to pick up speed and we accelerated our way down rapidly. Again, this was opposite to my natural reaction as we

needed speed to avoid a floppy control. With Judy's master skills, the landing felt like a kiss to the grass.

Three other BWPA members experienced microlight flying around the Dove Dale area. After settling down from my exhilarating flight, I decided to try microlighting too. As I told the instructor I would be visiting the local area the next day, he kindly took me to see Thorpe Cloud and the Stepping Stones from above. He even made a steep turn so that the Go Pro could take a good picture of the Dale. What an absolute treat and a brilliant day it was!

After this exciting day and filled with fresh high altitude air, I was exhausted. Next day, my venture was topped by a tranquillizing walk around "The Cloud" and the Dale on a beautiful autumn morning. ***The photographs show activities at Darley Moor, Amy's hang glider flight, and some of the BWPA visitors.***

> EVENT REPORTS CONT.

VISIT TO SPACE CENTRE



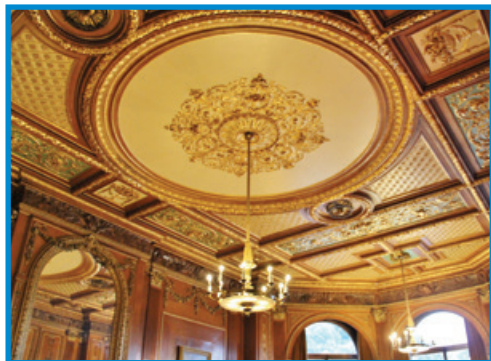
On a rainy Saturday November 12th, ten BWPA members and friends visited Leicester's National Space Centre, which was crowded due to a Steampunk festival filling the building with people in amazing costumes. Meeting under the Rocket Tower, we separated to tour the exhibits then re-assembled for lunch followed by the planetarium show – 'We are Stars'. We again toured individually, re-convening for group photos before we left. We marvelled at the

three enormous rockets in their special high tower; met models of a Dalek, R2D2 and Tim Peake; saw moon rock; learnt how to wash in space; and read many facts about planets, stars and comets. We were pleased to know that women make better astronauts than men, being less likely to suffer from heart or panic attacks, loneliness, pain, or noise and weighing less therefore being cheaper! There was too much to take in with just one visit but we agreed to return on a quieter day.

> EVENT REPORTS CONT.

VISIT TO RAF HALTON

Keith Clemo



On 20th November, BWPA visited this historic airfield and Halton House, situated within its boundaries. Sadly, heavy rain prevented arrivals by air, but 12 members from the South-East and Midlands attended.

Halton's connections with the Royal Air Force really began in 1880, when Alfred Rothschild had Halton House built as his country residence. We toured this elaborate building, now used as the Officers' Mess. The main hall and grand staircase were undergoing redecoration, after being used as a location for a forthcoming film; the entire room had been painted

bright red, and the floor covered in vinyl patterned with owls. I am sure that keen cinema-goers cannot wait for the film's release to see how it looked. Fortunately, the rest of the building was more in tune with the original décor, giving an insight into the meticulous character of Alfred Rothschild and the elegant and artistic lifestyle that he and his guests enjoyed.

Activities here changed dramatically in the run-up to the First World War, when the site was loaned to the Army for training troops, and then to the Royal Flying Corps for flying training. Purchased by the Royal Air Force in 1919, Halton became the RAF's main



centre for training engineering apprentices. Today, the station is used for induction of recruits for all the services.

We then moved to Halton's main site for lunch in the staff canteen, and then split into two parties to view its two museums. The Trenchard Museum shows the life of the young apprentices who trained here, highlighting the strong sense of discipline instilled into their personal lives and the great attention to detail needed in their work. Having attended an Air Training Corps summer camp at an RAF station in my teens, this made me very nostalgic. Outside, a squad of apprentices were being drilled on the parade ground for their graduation parade.

Finally we moved on to what was for many of us the highlight of the visit. Halton's Flight Heritage Centre is dedicated to RAF pilot training in general, but its claim to fame are its three working Link Trainers,

plus a modern Chipmunk simulator. The Link trainer was the first flight simulator and featured full 3-axis movement from the beginning. It was developed in the 1920's and was quickly adopted by the RAF both for ab-initio training, and for training pilots for instrument flight "under the hood".

Despite bad weather, we enjoyed our visit immensely, and thank Bill McGrath, Francis Hanford and the staff of RAF Halton for making us so welcome. The museums and other historic sites at Halton are open on Tuesdays by arrangement.

www.raf.mod.uk/rafhalton/publicinfo/index.cfm

RETAIL:
T: +44 (0)20 8207 3749
F: +44 (0)20 8953 2512
email: sales@pooleys.com

POOLEY'S
FLIGHT EQUIPMENT

TRADE:
T: +44 (0)20 8953 4870
F: +44 (0)20 8953 2512
email: trade@pooleys.com

RETAIL:
T: +44 (0)20 8207 3749
F: +44 (0)20 8953 2512
email: sales@pooleys.com

POOLEY'S
FLIGHT EQUIPMENT

TRADE:
T: +44 (0)20 8953 4870
F: +44 (0)20 8953 2512
email: trade@pooleys.com

NEW

Pooleys Flight Guide United Kingdom 2017

— plus 1 year iPlates subscription available

Now Features:

- More than 930 Landing Site Entries
- Over 450 Aerodrome Charts
- Every Plate re-mastered & Graticule Ticks Added

Available in 4 versions:

Spiral Flight Guide £26.99 plus iPlates £36.99
Bound Flight Guide £26.99 plus iPlates £36.99
Loose-leaf Flight Guide £36.99 plus iPlates £46.99
Loose-leaf Flight Guide with Binder £46.99 plus iPlates £56.99
iPlates one year subscription only £20.83 + vat £24.99



ACCESS TO THE POOLEYS FLIGHT GUIDE WITHIN AIRBOX, SKYDEMON & POCKETFMS ARE SEPARATE CHARGEABLE SUBSCRIPTIONS AVAILABLE THROUGH EACH PROVIDER AND NOT INCLUDED IN OUR iPLATES SUBSCRIPTION CARD.

PRICES HELD FOR 2017

POOLEY'S
is an Official Distributor for
Bose A20 Aviation Headsets
and Accessories

Prices from: £758.33 | £910.00 inc.VAT



GARMIN

POOLEY'S
is an Official
Distributor for
Portable
Garmin Products



David Clark DC ONE-X Headset



Price: £716.67 | £860.00 inc.VAT

LIGHTSPEED Zulu.2 Headset



Price: £660.00 | £792.00 inc.VAT

SENNHEISER HME110 Passive



Price: £204.17 | £245.00 inc.VAT

POOLEY'S FLIGHT EQUIPMENT



Price: £97.46 | £116.95 inc.VAT

Fast Find 220 PLB



Price: £195.83 | £235.00 inc.VAT

ResQLink+ 406 MHZ GPS PLB



Price: £229.16 | £274.99 inc.VAT

XCP Aviation Anti-Corrosion



RUST BLOCKER Trigger Spray 500ml Price: £12.49 | £14.99 inc.VAT
RUST BLOCKER Aerosol 400ml Price: £11.66 | £13.99 inc.VAT

Garmin VIRB XE Action Video Camera Bundle



Price: £345.00 | £414.00 inc.VAT

Garmin Glo Bluetooth GPS



Price: £110.00 | £132.00 inc.VAT

Novy Watch – Swiss Made



Price: £162.33 | £194.80 inc.VAT

Pooleys Pilot's Diary 2017



Price: £7.49 | £8.99 inc.VAT

Pooleys Leather Diary Cover



Price: £10.79 | £12.95 inc.VAT

D2 Bravo Titanium Watch



Price: £695.00 | £834.00 inc.VAT

BWPA Members get a **5% discount** from Pooleys at www.pooleys.com by using the promotional code **"BWPA"**

BWPA Members get a **5% discount** from Pooleys at www.pooleys.com by using the promotional code **"BWPA"**

FUTURE EVENTS

Rosemary Clemo

The proposed January visit to the AOPA simulator in London has been postponed.

Visit to Kelvedon Secret Nuclear Bunker, Essex - Sunday February 12th at 11.00am. Attractions include the operations room, the BBC studio for emergency broadcasts, the canteen, sick bay and dormitories. There is a café where snacks can be purchased. Cost: £8 (Members), £10 (Non-Members). Book by January 29th, using the form on the BWPA website, to Cheryl Sullivan, Albyns Hall, Albyn's Lane, Stapleford Tawney, Essex, RM4 1RS (01708 688 463), with cheque to BWPA or by bank transfer to Account No 10204595, Sort code 20-65-21, reference SNB* (your name).

Fly-In to Old Sarum with Visit to the Boscombe Down Aviation centre - Annabel Cook has invited BWPA members and friends to fly or drive to Old Sarum Airfield, Wiltshire on Saturday April 8th. Flying in costs £12 to BWPA members and £14 to non-members, to include landing fee plus entrance to the museum, which is on the airfield, and contains preserved cockpits and aircraft. Driving in costs £6 and £7. (www.boscombedownaviationcollection.co.uk). Pay Rosemary Clemo by cheque made out to BWPA to 2 Nursery Road Atherstone CV9 1PN or by bank transfer as above, reference OS* (your name).

Fly-In to Tatenhil - Keith and Rosemary Clemo invite you to our home airfield for a Fly In to support Aerobility on Saturday May 13th.

EVENTS TO BE FINALISED

Visit to Metal Seagulls, Rugby - Patricia Mawuli Porter invites BWPA to join the team of women and young people helping to build a Zenair CH750 STOL aircraft.

Tour of Cardington Airlander Hanger - We have been invited to tour the hangars housing the giant Airlander airship, at Cardington near Bedford. Our guide will be the airship's chief pilot. This will be on a week day.

Indoor free flying - A pub lunch followed by an afternoon group visit to Twinwoods, Bedford, to experience indoor sky diving in the vertical wind tunnel.

Tiger Moths - As a group, at Cambridge airfield (probably on a week day) or individually with Bob Brown at Sibson, Peterborough.

BWPA Fly-In's - To Sandown in June; possibly to Welshpool, Redhill and to Stapleford or Andrewsfield. Contact me, if you can offer BWPA a fly in to YOUR airfield.

Microlight Weekend in France - With Wanafly Airports, Azat le Ris, near Poitiers, possibly in September.

BWPA Training Weekend

To book all events or send ideas, venues or queries - Contact Rosemary Clemo on events@bwpa.co.uk or phone 01827 704 837.

Payment for all events can be made by cheque made out to BWPA, PayPal, or Bank Transfer. PayPal to treasurer@bwpa.co.uk and Bank Transfer to the BWPA account (Sort code 20-65-21 Account number 10204595).

BOOK REVIEW

Keith Clemo



WIN! BWPA COMPETITION

Win a copy of the reviewed book or the previously reviewed 'Itching to Climb' by Barbara James, by sending your name and address, plus the answer to this simple question – 'In which African Country did Jonathan go to live? (A) Nigeria or (B) Ghana?' to newsletter@bwpa.co.uk. First two correct answers win.

'WONDERFUL ADVERSITY – INTO AFRICA' by Jonathan and Patricia Porter

For many of you, Jonathan and Patricia will need no introduction. As well as representing their company Metal Seagulls at various UK air shows, and the speaking events they undertake, they are members of our association. Indeed, we were very proud to award Patricia the Naomi Christy Cup this year. Their story is an inspiring one; he coming from a hard-up, working-class British family and she from a rural village in Ghana, they pioneered the first organisation to build, maintain and operate microlight aircraft in Ghana.

This book is the first of a planned trilogy and describes Jonathan's upbringing, his early career as a computer programmer and how he was first drawn to travel to Ghana before eventually returning to live there. Some of life's experiences creep up on you, whereas others

literally slap you in the face. This book has more than its fair share of the latter. However, its central theme is that, no matter how grim life seems at the time, there is always something good that comes out of it in the long run.

The story of how they built their business in Africa has many twists and turns and is full of interesting characters, some supportive of their efforts and others openly hostile. It is well written, and makes for an interesting read that will keep you on the edge of your seat. I am eagerly awaiting the next book, giving Patricia's story, which is due out soon. **The photo shows Jonathan and Patricia Porter.**

'Wonderful Adversity: Into Africa' is available in paperback for £14.99 from Amazon.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN FLYING TRAINING

Helen Krasner

The third of four articles originally printed in 'Flight Training News' contributed by Helen Krasner, aviation journalist and former editor of the BWPA newsletter. Collections of Helen's articles have been published in book form, both in print and as e-books. She is the author of many other books, two of them about helicopter flying. Details can be found on her website, www.helenkrasner.com.

I thought at least twice before writing this article, for gender is a sensitive subject in these politically correct days. Sexism is perceived as akin to racism and all those other nasty bigoted 'isms', and even to suggest that women might be different from men when it comes to aviation could bring the wrath of the whole flying community down upon my head. In a way, this is as it should be. I'm old enough to remember the days when women earned less than men for the same work, and were perceived as unsuitable for a whole variety of jobs. Flying for the airlines was certainly one of those careers closed to them, and I know of several ex-ATA aviators who found it impossible to get a job after the Second World War. Thankfully, things have completely changed.

So, why am I bringing up the gender issue now? Because, in my albeit limited experience as a student, a pilot, and later an instructor, it seems to me that there are differences in the way men and women learn to fly, and that these can affect the whole of their flying training. I emphasise that this article is only based on what I've seen; I could be wrong. And, as with any generalisations, there will be exceptions, perhaps many of them. So if I say that women appear to be this way or that way, or that men are better or worse at some subject, please, please don't write to

the editor in a flap and say that this doesn't apply to you! It may not, and that's fine and normal. But I suspect it will apply to a proportion of readers, and if you recognise yourself, or your students, in some of what I say, maybe you will find it helpful.

The gender differences start before you even get near an aircraft. One of the facts that is well documented is the small number of women in aviation – around 6% of private pilots are female, 2-3% of commercial pilots, a number which is approximately the same in most of the developed world and has stayed more or less static for many years. Why should this be so? I think a lot of it goes beyond aviation, and is due to the different perceptions men and women have of their purpose in life. Men seem to be more inclined to think that if they want something, they should have it. So if he has the money and the time, a man will decide to learn to fly – why not? Women, on the other hand, tend to worry about things like this. They agonise over whether flying is the best use of their money and time, and even if they have the right to use that money and time on themselves. Surely, a woman typically thinks, I should use it for the family, or the house, or...well, anything except myself. Of course, not all women are like that, as I said above. If they were, there wouldn't be any women pilots. And I'm certainly not like that; I'm far too selfish to think that



tasking and should therefore make better helicopter pilots than men – though that's not a difference I've actually noticed myself in practice, I might add; there's little variation in the longer term. But my logic falls on deaf ears. Usually the woman shakes her head and just repeats, like a mantra, "No, I couldn't".

She sometimes qualifies this by comments such as "I'm no good at technical things", "I'm not very co-ordinated" or something similar. Well, plenty of men don't have great co-ordination when they start either, but they learn, and they seem to know instinctively that they can. Indeed, they often don't even recognise that they have a difficulty, and this can make it hard for them to improve. But the difference remains – women think they can't do things; men assume they can. And in my experience, this carries on all the way through flying training, which means that men accept setbacks with less worry than women – although the downside is that they're sometimes less willing to work hard to overcome them. I'm not sure whether over-confidence or under-confidence is worse; and that's probably a whole topic in itself for another time. But at least the over-confident get started; the under-confident may never get beyond the airfield gate.

way! But I've seen it so often in women who come for trial lessons. They'd like to carry on with the course, they have the money, but they feel guilty spending it on themselves. Is guilt taught to young girls at an early age? If so, and it applies to you, please recognise that fact and get rid of it. You have rights too!

I believe there is another main reason why fewer women actually start flying, and when they do, often struggle more in the early stages than their male counterparts. This has to do with confidence. For some reason, men generally assume they can do things and learn new skills, while women think they can't. When I teach helicopter trial lessons, often the new student is a man who has been bought a trial lesson voucher as a present by his wife, partner, or girlfriend. What commonly happens is that he is enthusiastic about helicopter flying, might even be thinking of doing more. When that happens, I usually turn to the woman and ask, "Why don't you give it a go?" But I've heard the typical answer so often now that I almost expect it... "Oh no, I couldn't". Not "I don't want to, I can't afford it, it's not my thing..." but "I couldn't".

I usually point out that I'm a perfectly ordinary woman and I managed it, and that many other women do too. Sometimes I try to help by mentioning that we women are supposed to be really good at multi-

This "I'm no good at technical things" comment is quite telling, and probably represents another reason why so few women learn to fly, and approach things differently when they do. Even in this day and age, fewer women appear to know about technical things than their male counterparts – or at least that's true of the ones I've run into. Actually it doesn't matter. Time and again I have told women that you don't need to be technically minded to learn to fly, that when I started I barely knew what an engine was, and I certainly never thought I'd understand how one worked. I also tell them that you don't actually need that sort of knowledge to learn to fly; you just need it for the ground exams, mainly because it's quite a good idea when something goes wrong to have some idea what to do next and know whether you have an emergency on your hands. But again, my comments often fall on deaf ears. I suspect that in our society little boys still grow up tinkering with cars with their...>

dads and little girls don't, and that this contributes to attitudes when they're older, though I'm not sure about that. But the perception remains, for whatever reason.

Finally, I think we're all affected by the opinions and assumptions of others, and people in the world generally are still surprised to find a woman who flies. Just yesterday, an acquaintance I hadn't met for some time asked if I was still flying. On receiving an answer in the affirmative she said, "Oh good, I love telling people that I know a helicopter pilot, and a woman too!" I didn't mind, but why the novelty value? Indeed, a female North Sea oil rig helicopter pilot of my acquaintance said that she was so tired of being a novelty that she had started telling people she had a part time job at the airport! Anyway, although prejudice within the aviation industry and at flying schools varies from rare to non-existent, in my experience this is not the case when it comes to the general public. Although, to be fair, it's not generally prejudice in the sense of believing women can't fly or thinking they shouldn't, it's just surprise that they do. So I have flown to airfields and seen jaws drop as I get out of the pilot's seat, had trial lesson students at airfields convinced I must be the receptionist or tea lady (despite my instructor's uniform), and been featured on various websites as a fascinating example of what women can do these days – which is quite gratifying but seems a little strange in the 21st

century. And this sort of thing is not going to help a woman who knows nothing about flying to even think of learning it herself.

So there you have it. In my experience, less women are prepared to spend money and time on themselves in the first place, they are unsure of their abilities when they do start flying, they worry about a perceived or real lack of technical ability or knowledge, and take on board the fact that the world sees female pilots as rare, freakish, or exceptional. While men are happy to go ahead with what they want to do, quite sure they can achieve it, think 'suck, squeeze, bang, blow' and similar stuff is a breeze, and when they start to fly are perceived as doing something perfectly normal that anyone can do. Put like that, of course it's all a bit of an exaggeration, even a caricature. But there is truth in it too. At least, there has been for me and the people I've known.

What can be done about it? Probably nothing, except to live long enough to see things change, as they have, and probably will even more in the future. But knowledge is power, and knowing how you perceive the world can be useful, as sometimes it enables you to change. So if you find anything I've said strikes a chord with you, that's great – get on and do something about it. And if not, well, I never said I was always right. After all, I'm a woman, so I wouldn't be likely to think that, now would I?

MY FLYING LIFE - PARAGLIDING

Peggy Williams

Being a Gloucestershire born and bred farmer's daughter, I had a lovely childhood on the farm with my brother and sisters, with all the pets and animals you could wish for. We also had ponies and I spent my childhood summers on the gymkhana circuit, later graduating to thoroughbreds and the amateur racing circuit.



I have had a bit of a roller coaster finding my absolute passion in life of paragliding. Now I love nothing more than to catch a thermal on a hill, climb out and fly cross country with my friends. I first saw paragliding in about 1999, when I lived up a beautiful valley in the Scottish Borders. At the time, all my spare hours were spent training and riding my own horses in races – and winning too! In the summer these three guys used to occasionally appear on the hillside above me and float around. I had no idea what it was, but thought how I would love to be up there and what an amazing view they had, but the horses took up all my time and money. I later found out that one of the guys was the mechanic who used to repair my car at the local garage.

In 2006, after moving back south, and no longer having horses, I booked lessons with a local flying school and spent the next two years gaining my flying qualification, followed closely by getting my motorbike licence too!

The first couple of years I didn't really fly much. Then in April 2009 three of us took a holiday in Spain. On the second day I was on take-off when a strong thermal came through, lifted me up and carried me back over the boulders, where it dropped me and I got dragged about 100m, rupturing my liver. I spent three weeks in hospital in Malaga and the summer getting my strength back. In September, I decided I was strong enough to fly again and got out ground handling, but it took a tandem ride with a friend to give me confidence to fly again.

In 2012 I decided that life was too short and nothing would stop me from what I loved so I started flying regularly again. That September I was out in Spain again, flying a demo glider, and doing my first cross country flights. The third XC flight saw me coming in low over olive trees to land and getting a collapse which threw me into the bottom of a tree and broke my pelvis in three places.

I spent five months recovering and two days after I had the all clear, I was on the Malvern Hills ground handling with friends. Then I went home and ordered a new glider! I went on to fly fifty hours in 2013 and do my first UK cross country flights. In February 2014 I went on a guided holiday to Colombia, where I flew my 100th hour of airtime and in 2015 I took a two week trip to Nepal and flew around the Himalayan foothills.

Since starting flying I have been a member of Avon Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club, and wanted to give something back to the sport, so I volunteered to join the club committee as Social Secretary and have since become Chairman. In the last couple of years I have become a Club Coach, passed my Pilot rating and, last year was third in the women's XC league as well as 85th overall out of over 300 in the national league.

I am a regular on the hills and can be seen out during the week if it's looking like a good XC day. My PB is currently 70km and I'm still pushing to break the 100km. I now regularly average over 100 hours per year, fly with a pod harness and have recently upgraded to an even sportier glider.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

SHEILA SCOTT'S SOLO CIRCUMNAVIGATION – GOLDEN JUBILEE

Beverley Harrison



All manner of seemingly irrelevant items appear in our BWPA Archive that over the years gain greater interest, because otherwise who knows who or what will be important or interesting in 50 years?

Born in 1927, Sheila Scott, one of our early members, worked as a nurse during the War and later as a model and actress. She started flying as a dare, because she seemed an unlikely pilot as she could not even drive. Yet she was a successful air race competitor from the outset. By 1964 she was regularly setting flying records and it became her ambition to set even bigger records. Whilst presenting a glamorous image, she needed publicity to generate the essential

sponsorship to carry out her inevitably expensive projects, little different from Amy Johnson, some 25 to 30 years before her.

Just over 50 years ago, Sheila Scott set her round-the-world record in her single engine G-ATOY; a Piper Comanche named 'Myth Too'; leaving Heathrow on 18th May and returning there, 33 days and 3 minutes later, on 20th June 1966. 38-year-old Sheila Scott's route included London – Rome – Athens – Damascus – India – Rangoon – Singapore – Bali – Australia – New Zealand – Fiji – Hawaii – the USA – Newfoundland – Azores – Portugal – Heathrow. The journey cost £20,000, at 1966 prices!



Thereafter she was rarely out of the news. Copies from her press cutting service provide evidence of constant press releases as record attempts progressed. Her publicity backfired in that everyone knew when she was not at home and her London flat was burgled whilst she was flying over the North Pole. She was not wealthy, as probably expected, but her trophies and a camera were stolen.

Sheila won the BWPA Brabazon Trophy on three occasions. She was a great supporter of flying for girls, as a steady supporter of the Girls' Venture Corps. There were racy stories about her, many fictional, but it is difficult to differentiate her from 'Lady Penelope', or characters in 'Those Magnificent Men in Their

Flying Machines' in events such as the 1960 London to New York Air Race. In 1971, she flew 1 ½ times around the world, including crossing the North Pole, which took her beyond one hundred flying records set. In 1988, despite plans to fly over the Antarctic, she died aged 61 years. Just before Sheila died, Judy Lomax included her in her book 'Women of the Air', and wrote her biography in 1991. The photos show Sheila with the map of her round-the-world trip; her return to Heathrow; and at Sywell in 1973. **(Please contact BWPA via the newsletter if you are on these photos or would share your memories of the event.)**

OBITUARY MOLLY ROSE OBE

(November 26th 1920 – October 16th 2016)



Molly Rose, who died aged 95, was an Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA) pilot who joined as an already qualified pilot. She progressed from Tiger Moths to Hurricanes and Spitfires, sometimes flying three different types of plane on one day. Later, she delivered twin engine aircraft such as Ansons and Hudsons, then Wellington bombers and Mosquitoes. She was based in Luton, White Waltham and Hamble. By the time she left in May 1945 she had delivered 486 aircraft, flying 38 different types.

The daughter of David Marshall, founder of Marshall Aviation at Cambridge, Molly joined the family firm as an apprentice engineer. Her brother, Arthur Marshall, taught her to fly his Tiger Moth. She gained both her driving and her pilot's licence aged 17. After the war, Molly never flew again. She and her husband settled in Oxford where she became a parish councillor and magistrate, honoured as Deputy Lieutenant for Oxfordshire in 1983. *The photos show Molly (on the left) with ATA pilots, and with Lesley Runnalls at White Waltham last September.*

FLYING IN GERMANY

Lucy Irwin



Deciding to live and work in Germany 16 years ago was definitely a serious lifestyle choice, and unfortunately not the start of some extended holiday. (Friends may disagree.)

I have to admit, though, to having found the land of Dichter und Denker (poets and philosophers) one that is surprisingly accessible to private flying. I'm lucky to have a partner who is a competent PPL. However, hailing from Einstein's place of birth, trips around Teutonia are like coals from Newcastle to him: a proper holiday can only truly take place south of the Alps. The Alps are moody to VFR pilots, though, and I've still got much of Germany left to discover. As it turns out, Einstein also

has a fair few places left to visit in the Republic too. So with a C172 to ourselves for three days, we started to consider what we might like to do.

There is a group of islands at the North West coast called the Frisians. This chain of long, thin, islands is surrounded by the beautiful Wadden Sea, a shallow sea that forms fascinating patterns in the underlying white mush that can only be properly appreciated from the air. I want to go there. Two things stand between us: the necessity for VFR conditions over 400 nautical miles for the next 48 hours and the trivial matter that we do not possess life vests. ...>



German efficiency is almost always as good as they say it is, but expecting my life vests to arrive the following morning defied all logic. The shop is, however, based at Mannheim airfield. And I have a plane. I can pick them up. So early on Saturday morning, we set off from Augsburg to Mannheim, a field completely surrounded by the city. "We weren't always in the city", explains the helpful man at the fuelling station, "The city expanded and surrounded us". So far, however, this does not appear to be a problem as the field seems to be doing well and safe from harm. After coffee with some UK flying friends who were heading home from their holiday in Eastern Europe, we decided to make tracks to the North.

After over 2 hours of flying, we landed in Ganderkersee, just west of Bremen. The young controller was very forgiving of my way of pronouncing the place, but I am sure he was laughing when not transmitting. We found a hotel near the field, although it does have a hotel and restaurant on the spot, making it an ideal stop-over place for anyone touring the country by plane. They appeared to be hosting a wedding, so perhaps a quieter hotel further away was not a bad

move. The following day, we woke to bright sunshine and the promise of weather good enough for the islands. In contact with Bremen Info, we decided to go for the coastal route, since we do not have much coast in Bavaria, and the concept is slowly becoming a novelty for me.

Juist is as remote from Bavaria as you can possibly get: not a single lederhosen in sight (my observation), and a severe reduction in the sizes of the beer glasses (Einstein's observation). They even talk a little funny too. 400 nautical miles and I am somehow surprised to still be in the same country. Flying in any other direction for that length of time from Augsburg I'd have been able to reach from one to three different countries by now. Germany is big and borders eight countries. The Juist landing fee at 11€ was a fraction of the price I expected for such a busy and touristic destination. The field is well run and the staff friendly and helpful. There is a lively restaurant at the field, as the airfield doubles up as a tourist attraction. There is nothing quite like having a curious audience when you are landing in a coastal cross-wind on a shortish, unfamiliar runway. No Bavarian Schweinshaxe on



the menu here, but healthy fish dishes with fresh salads, followed by a wholesome walk to the beach. No cars on this island, just bicycles, horses and, well, small aircraft.

The weather forecast promised that a dash back South surprisingly wasn't yet necessary. What else did we have on our lists, where there might be a pleasant airfield? We put our money on Lübeck, as they had a controlled field close to the town, and our route did not require too many dog-legs around Hamburg's generous airspace. Of the places we visited, however, this was the only one where we didn't call ahead as we felt, given the size of the airport, it would not be necessary. As it turned out, it was a sleepy little place, and barely running. The bill for fuel came a few days later as they had no one on hand at the field to deal with it. It was hardly surprising then when our taxi driver on the way back to the airport explained that the field had gone bust three times in the last few years, "and it's not because the locals didn't want it", she added sadly. The few staff members present were both friendly and helpful, and I hope that with luck, Lübeck Airport will survive. It is only a 10

minute drive from the beautiful former "Hansestadt" or shipping merchant's city of the same name, and is fully open to light aircraft, despite appearances.

Next day, the weather report showed that our gamble had paid off, and we could fly home without diverting or hurrying. Our route was one straight line, North to South (imagine managing that by VFR in most European countries), thanks to being allowed through Nuremberg's Delta. A short stop in a tidy field called Sömmerda meant we could break our journey, get fuel for ourselves (Wienerschnitzels with chips) and the plane (Unleaded). We also realised that we'd landed in former East German. The fact that it didn't occur to us before we were on the ground and noted their accents is a beautiful sign of how far this country has come since 1989. The final leg brought beautiful views of Nuremberg, and before we knew it, we were home, Augsburg airport being unbearably hot on the ground, and correspondingly sleepy. We washed our faithful steed and tidied it away in the hanger. Once all was done and dusted, Einstein and I got ourselves two large beers. **The photographs show the islands, Juist tower, Lübeck, and Sömmerda entrance.**



MY JOB IN AVIATION

Hazel Crozier

Hazel is curator at the RAF College, Cranwell, where she learnt to fly and gained her PPL.

A few years ago, a group of BWPA members flew into RAF Cranwell for a trip around College Hall, given by myself. I was still a student pilot wondering whether the dream would actually come true....however, 254 hours later and with 41 hours P1 bagged, including a solo trip for my first encounter with the "big boys" at Southend for Sunday lunch back home with Mum ☺, solo trip to meet up with an old University friend whom I had not seen for 20 years at Sywell, and doing the usual solo trip to Duxford...along with countless circuit sessions and local area bimbles...I am gradually getting more confidence. The only thing that drives me nuts is the great British Weather! I am just itching to do more land-aways and to explore...then the weather has other ideas (like today for instance)...but I must be patient, these things will come....

Well, to work. I have been RAF College curator for seven years now. Not sure whether it has gone quickly or not! But I am still there and still enjoying working with the RAF and with the RAF's history. When asked what do I do, I generally reply "Look after anything that's old"....as that really encompasses my day job. Cranwell did not have a curator before I started there in 2009, so, the setting up of a collections management system, and accessioning (cataloguing) the collection, along with conservationally sound storage was all down to me.

The areas I cover are research, conservation, displays/exhibitions/publications, environmental monitoring, collections management, oral history, and tour guiding. That may not seem a lot, but within each of those basic categories is another whole subset of tasks

which need my attention. Unlike curators in a large museum, I have responsibility for the entire collection, so deal with anything from WW1 squadron records, to photographs of RNAS Cranwell or of the latest Royal Graduation.... to a fine 18th Century piece of silverware and a rare 18th Century Abraham Prime Grandfather Clock, to a DFC set of medals to an original canvas of Group Captain Bader painted by the well-known war artist, Cuthbert Orde.

Conservation is a high part of any curator's day; I particularly enjoy delving into the archives to see what treasures I can find. As I am the first curator at Cranwell, nothing had been done with the archives.... which in a way was fantastic, because I had free rein to start with a blank sheet of paper!

Basic document and photographic archive conservation means that one takes the documents and photographs out of whatever horrendous way they have been stored (polypockets, plastic bags, acidic boxes) and replaces these with acid free files, boxes, Melynex (archival) plastic, and, of course, that old curatorial favourite, replacing the steel pins/paperclips with brass paperclips! They also need to be stored flat, so documents must be unfolded and photographs unrolled. Conservation on other artefacts such as silver and artwork is more complex, and it's down to me to get a specialist in those fields involved. Remember ladies, it's bad to dust!! Mechanical cleaning abrades the artefact more, so generally, it shouldn't be done....

Collections Management is another large part of my job. Have you wondered how museums keep track of all their artefacts? Well, every professional museum will have a collections management system on computer and/or a hard register. The process of cataloguing every single document, photograph and object is called "accessioning". I have so far accessioned about 5,400 artefacts, documents and photographs. This is by no means all of our collection, but perhaps, maybe a quarter of it.... When an object is accessioned, it is given a unique reference number and all the pertinent fields are filled in on the museums database – think an Access database x 10 and you'll probably have the picture of a specialist museums database!

Collections management also includes assessing disposal (VERY Few!); noting conditions, to prioritise conservation either by myself or an external specialist, as we do for our canvas artworks; asking donors to sign donation paperwork; arranging inward and outward loans and the associated paperwork and condition checking.

Oral History is another enjoyable part of my job. I love chatting to veterans from the Second World War, who are sadly becoming fewer. So far, I have spoken with Mr Nicholson, a nonagenarian who was an ATA pilot. He has amazing stories and flew many types, including Spitfires, Swordfish, and Ansons, often not having flown the type before, and having to read the pilots' notes as he went along. His story alone, I am sure, would fascinate BWPA members: I was gripped. He also flew on a PPL after the war, and when Mr Nicholson knew he was talking with a fellow PPL his face just lit up, and from then on we were talking the same language!

I have also met Chelsea Pensioners who flew planes such as Lancasters, Mosquitos, Canberras, and Vulcans. It is an honour and privilege to meet these gentlemen and record their memories for posterity. If any BWPA members know any female ATA pilots, please do point them in my direction, as I would love to interview them. Other aspects of my work are research and displays, exhibitions and the writing of articles. I regularly write articles on aspects of the Station's history for our station magazine. I also research and write for special occasion booklets; for instance, for the Middle Eastern Alumni dinner in 2014 and for the Battle of Britain 75th Anniversary last year. Cranwell trained and provided 81 Battle of Britain pilots, one of the most famous being Douglas Bader. 2016 was our Station Centenary so I was heavily involved with centenary celebrations, radio interviews and the obligatory booklet! I am writing a book which will be the "definitive" history of RNAS/RAF Cranwell, for the RAF's Centenary in 2018 and the College's in 2020. So research is heavily on the agenda in my daily work.

Exhibitions and displays form part of the life of any curator. I often put on temporary exhibitions, and carry out the research relating to them. This year, I ...>



liaised with Windsor Castle to borrow King George V's RAF No 1 dress uniform for our Royal Graduation in the presence of the Earl of Wessex. Apparently, the Prince was very interested to see his grandfather's uniform! I have also put on displays for the Royal Observer Corps, Sir Frank Whittle's 75th anniversary of the Jet Engine (the E28/39 Gloster Whittle first flew from Cranwell in May 1941) and of course our Station Centenary. I am working on an exhibition about No 4 RAF Hospital Rauceby; which has a strong link to Cranwell, and was a satellite of the East Grinstead Crash and Burns Unit, and as such was frequent host to Sir Archibald McIndoe. I hope to invite some of the remaining "Guinea Pigs" to the exhibition opening.

I also advise other RAF units with their station or squadron history rooms, as there is no other professional curator within the RAF. I particularly enjoyed assisting the BBMF with their collection, and researching the men behind the aircraft colour schemes.

So, that is how an RAF curator spends her day. Apart from that, there are perks - Mess dinners, watching aircraft from the office window on a daily basis (some fantastic impromptu air displays including from the Reds, BBMF and a practice for the Queen's birthday flypast) and my final thought to leave you with... sorry to make you jealous ladies...but the odd flight in something interesting!

If BWPA members would like to visit Cranwell, you would be very welcome. Arrange it through me, via the BWPA (then I'll give you my contact details). Also, if members would like to fly into RAF Barkston Heath at the weekend, "just because", I should be able to arrange PPR for you to visit the Flying Club, as long as you have an MoD insurance waiver. Again, please contact me through BWPA in the first instance. Happy and safe flying!



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2017

Sunday 12th

Visit to Kelvedon Nuclear Bunker

APRIL 2017

Saturday 8th

BWPA Fly-in to Old Sarum

MAY 2017

Saturday 6th

TOP NAV (details above)

Saturday 13th

Fly-in to Tatenhill

JUNE 2017

Thursday 1st - Saturday 3rd

Aero-Expo at Wycombe Air Park

Friday 9th - Sunday 11th

FEWP near Paris

Saturday 24th - Wednesday 28th

Malta Rally www.maltarally.org

DECEMBER 2017

Sunday 10th

BWPA AGM & Christmas Lunch

For BWPA events, details and to book contact Rosemary Clemo via newsletter@bwpa.co.uk or 01827 704 837.



BRITISH WOMEN PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

White Waltham Airfield
Waltham Road
Maidenhead
Berks, SL6 3NJ

info@bwpa.co.uk / www.bwpa.co.uk



FOLLOW US



facebook.com/bwpa.uk
twitter.com/BWPA_UK