



Spitfire



THE JOURNAL OF THE SPITFIRE SOCIETY

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Spitfire



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Chair

Position currently vacant

Vice-chair

Stephen Pearse
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Secretary

Position currently vacant

Treasurer

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Membership Secretaries

Michael & Lucy Hayes
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Founder:
(The late) Group Captain
D J Green OBE

For regular updates, please
see the Society's website:
www.spitfiresociety.org

Articles for submission in
either 'High Flight' or 'Spitfire'
should be sent to the
Membership Secretaries.

Please prepare your article
using Microsoft Word.
Pictures should be High-Res
JPEG or TIFF files.

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THE JOURNAL OF
THE SPITFIRE SOCIETY
AUTUMN 2019

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Clockwise from top:

Spitfire Mk Vc JG891; Spitfire Mk IX MH434;
Spitfire Mk Vc EE602; Spitfire line up at the Duxford
Battle of Britain Airshow 2019.





Vice-Chair's Report



The repair works for Aksel have been going well over the summer and she will soon be on display at her new home in one of the hangars at the North East Aircraft Museum in Sunderland.



We'll be posting pictures of her unveiling nearer the time on our Web site.

We are now into the second year of The Spitfire Society Award and a new student will be receiving the Society's support during their studies with our first recipient taking a placement year in motorsport aerodynamics before returning back to aviation to complete their studies in September 2020. We will be announcing this second recipient's details on the Society Web site and will keep you all posted with their progress and updates from the Students.

2020 will be a special year for The Spitfire Society with the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain in the late summer and we will be busy with many events across the country focusing on the contribution played during that pivotal time in our history.

Next year will also be crucial for the Society as the Executive Committee and myself are currently in the final year of our current tenure on the Committee. Sadly, Michael and Lucy announced at this year's AGM their retirement and intention not to stand for re-election next year. They will both be sorely missed and Michael and Lucy's hard work has contributed so much to the Society over the last few years. Their dedication together with Daniel's never ending enthusiasm and commitment has ensured that the Society has been able to continue and develop into the modern Society we have today. They have been key in shaping the Society and we, as members, must look at what we can do by volunteering with help to support the

running of the Society and encouraging with the younger generation to engage for the future.

We are currently functioning with a skeleton crew, just fulfilling the quorate requirements. This must change; volunteers can start by joining the committee as casual members, with the option of being elected to a tenured post at the 2020 AGM.



I look forward to catching up with the committee after the Summer season at our next ECM in October. We will have many subjects to cover, including potential events and activities for next year. Unfortunately I have been unable to visit more of our Roundels, this year and hope to meet some of the representatives at our Autumn ECM. I have been really impressed with feedback of the volunteers who helped promote The Society to the public.

We will also be looking at extending support from Patrons and bring on board further Patrons to the Society. We will, as always, keep you posted on the website as appointments are announced.

Steve Pearse

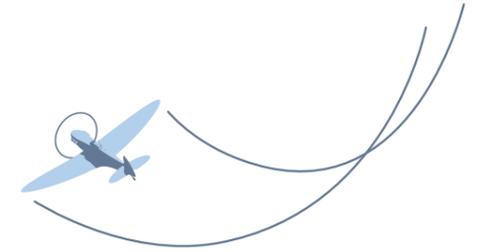


Treasurer's Report



Since the AGM I've been busy on a number of fronts on behalf of the Society and glad to report on a number of successes and progress.

Within this Journal you'll be reading about the restoration of the Society Spitfire replica Aksel by Stu-Art Aviation Furniture in Gateshead. This has been achieved at a significantly lower cost than originally envisaged, also Aksel will be displayed inside the North East Land, Sea, Air Museums in Sunderland which will greatly improve its long-term preservation and public access. Society members will have free access to the Museum on production of their membership card. We will also be looking to create a local Roundel to support Aksel at the Museum and increase the Society's membership in an under-represented region.



Another Society benefit we have negotiated is a 15% discount on the Spitfire simulator at the Spitfire and Hurricane Museum in Manston which then entitles a £200 discount on a real Spitfire flight at Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar, see separate review.

In collaboration with East Grinstead Town Council we put on a Battle of Britain film festival to raise funds for the Queen Victoria Hospital and the Society. This involved a ceremony at the Sir Archibald McIndoe statue, presentations and book signings by Dr Emily Mayhew on the Guinea Pig Club and our very own Vice-President Paul Beaver on the Battle of Britain Fleet Air Arm pilots. Vintage styling for adults and children and the showing of Spitfire: Inspiration of a Nation, Lancaster Skies and Secret Spitfires, thanks to all those who permitted the screening of the films and contributed to the event which raised £1,000.

One of the most heart warming events this year involved an anonymous American donor who contacted the Society via twitter. Having read an article that we tweeted relating to Tony Foulds and his upkeep of a memorial to the crew of a Flying Fortress 'Mi Amigo' that crashed near Sheffield in 1944, the donor asked if the Society would relay a donation to Tony from him. This represented something of a challenge as we had no contact details but social media came to the rescue! Dan Walker of BBC Breakfast put us in contact with Tony's friend who suggested that the donor could purchase clothes for a formal engagement, see picture. The Society received the funds from the donor and in his own words, 'I have to say this picture has me chuffed', when he was shown the

images. The Society used the remaining amount for The Spitfire Fund beer and film festival event, proof if needed that one good turn deserves another and that social media can be a vehicle for bringing people across the world to bring about positive outcomes for all concerned.

Please do purchase merchandise from our on-line store as it all aids the work of the Society. I should mention that we now only have six Spitfire 80th anniversary coins left in stock and will be looking to bring out Battle of Britain anniversary merchandise for next year.

Please do engage with the public be it through social media or in person to extol the virtues of the Society as we need to maintain and increase the membership so the Society can prosper into the future. Our website and social media channels are the best places to find out about the latest news and the member's area provides exclusive content and benefits for you.

Next year we have our AGM at Bristol Aerospace Museum, see separate advert and we're arranging a diverse range of speakers to make the day even more special. Also, we're collaborating with museums and organisations to mark the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, this will raise the profile of the Society and the Spitfire with the wider public. The Society has an exciting future programme ahead so please don't hesitate to contact me and persuade others to join the Society.

Daniel Scott-Davies

Finding the 'Ring of Truth'

Richard Lyon and Jean-Yves Le Lan

Foreword by Air Marshal Sir Richard Garwood KBE CB DFC RAF

Finding the 'Ring of Truth'

The story of a Scottish Spitfire pilot from RAF 234 Squadron, Missing in Action in late July 1944, and the odyssey of 2003-2015 to identify his war grave in southern Brittany.



Richard Lyon and Jean-Yves Le Lan



Copies of this book can be ordered from:
www.januspublishing.co.uk,
sales@januspublishing.co.uk,
Amazon UK, or by phoning the
Janus sales office on 01206 578856.
Price: £24.95

Both Richard Lyon and Jean-Yves Le Lan (along with many others) should be commended for 'Finding the Ring of Truth' and their endeavours to remember the contribution and sacrifice of Flying Officer Ernest Russell Lyon.

The story features many subjects that authors rarely feature or as members of the public take for granted. Such as access to accurate and complete records that underpin so many things in our lives from research to health care and beyond. The internet has allowed us to make research more accessible and to share and communicate freely across the world in a way that was unimaginable a few decades ago.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission's continuing work to maintain the physical state of cemeteries across the world but also the memory of all those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The friendship and collaboration between people of different nations to achieve recognition for a young Scottish pilot who died upholding freedom that we all benefit from to the current day.

Other praise for *Finding the Ring of Truth*:

'There is something profoundly moving about the way Richard Lyon fought to identify his beloved kinsman'

Professor Andrew Roberts – author: Churchill: Walking with Destiny.

“'Heroic persistence' indeed – but an inspirational book in other ways too”

Dr Nigel Richardson – author: Thring of Uppingham: Victorian Educator

'In this very well presented and readable book he has treated us to a lesson on how exhaustive research and honest persistence can pay off'

Group Captain Nigel J.R. Walpole OBE BA FRAeS. – author: Dragon Rampant

The Story of 234 Fighter Sqn



Membership Secretaries Report

Current membership stands at 717 (a loss of 51 since the 2018 AGM). Of these 309 are Life members and 408 Paying members. Sadly we are losing quite a few of the older members as they go to the Airfield in the sky. These are being replaced by 16 new members due to adverts in Flypast and Aeroplane Magazine, the Web Site and various Airshows.

Thank you to all those who have completed a new Standing Order Form for the increase in Membership Subscription and the change of Bank account to Barclays.

If anyone has not done so and would like a new Standing Order Form please contact us.

The Society has claimed back £856 from HMRC in Gift Aid.

If you pay Income Tax we can claim back 25p in the £1 for the membership subscription. That is £6 if paying £24 per year.

If you would like to Gift Aid your membership subscription and have not already done so, please contact us for a form. It only needs to be completed once.

If you have any other questions regarding Membership please do not hesitate to contact us.

Michael & Lucy Hayes

Telephone: 01822 853679

Email: memsec@spitfiresociety.org





2019 AGM

Left to right:

Daniel Scott-Davies & Nigel Fish;
Michael Hayes, Hywell Guilford, Lucy
Hayes and Gerald Owen; Hywell Guilford,
Lucy Hayes and Gerald Owen; DS-D and
Nigel Fish; DS-D and Nigel Fish;

Lucy Hayes, Michael Hayes, Steve
Williams, David Williams and Steve
Pearse; Lucy Hayes, Michael Hayes,
Steve Williams and Steve Pearse.



2020 AGM

**To be held at the Aerospace Bristol Museum
on 30th May 2020.**

Please see <http://aerospacebristol.org/find-us>
for location information.

Members will have free access to the Museum and Concorde
on the day and must prebook in advance with the Treasurer
or Membership Secretaries by 15 April 2020 at the latest.

Schedule

10am – Tea, coffee and biscuits served

1-2pm – Buffet lunch served

2-3pm – Presentations followed by Tea, coffee and biscuits served

3-5pm – AGM Business Meeting



Canada Calling!

By Spitfire Mo

The Spitfire Society Canadian Representative

Dave O'Malley & Mo in front of their treasured Spitfire at Vintage Wings of Canada Museum

Several things have been happening within The Spitfire Society in Canada over the last number of months. Although our members are spread out over our provinces most reside in either Ontario towards the Eastern part of the country, or in British Columbia on the Western Coast. – In these two provinces we lay wreaths at the memorials on November 11th on behalf of the society in remembrance of the pilots who fought for the freedom we enjoy to-day.

We used to have several ex-WWII Spitfire pilots as members, but, unfortunately, they have each passed on. The rest of us are either children of the war – mostly born before the war started in 1939 – or aviation enthusiasts who favour Spitfires above other warplanes. Some members are the off-spring of WWII veterans.



Dave Burnell looking over Jaye's photo collection of her past birthday

Unfortunately due to our members living so far afield of one another it is impossible to arrange for regular meetings, such as monthly or bi-monthly. But neither to be discouraged nor to give in, provincial social get-togethers are arranged at times during the summer months.

This year we have had two happenings:

First of all, last March Dave Burnell, our aviation author whose novels, when they are published are noted about in our Canadian Spitfire Society newsletter, drove me over to visit with Jaye Edwards. We found that she lived only about an hour's drive from the city where we both live.

It was only recently that we found out about Jaye. She was one of our ATA (Air Transport Auxiliary) pilots and is one of the three still surviving. She turned 100 years old, which means she is coming up to her 101st birthday this fall (autumn).

Jaye is a lovely lady and an absolute delight to speak with.

It seems that Jaye has never thought about her aviation career since the war until about a couple of years ago when she was sought out to be interviewed on television. That seems so amazing.

Dave and I had taken gifts for her: Dave's being a copy of one of his books and mine was a mini album of photographs of aviation water-colour paintings that I have done. But our "gifts" in return were to hear all her stories about her experiences in her flying career... and to listen to those certainly were gifts. Memories in a nutshell.

Seeing pictures of the various planes each brought a special memory of Jaye's, such as about the time that the young instructor of Jaye and her group of piloting students was to take up a Wellington bomber giving it the once over, as is the norm, prior to getting in the pilot's seat. But no-one mentioned about the guns and such that were loaded in the back of the aircraft. So once in the air this ATA instructor had trouble as the

plane wouldn't level off as it should have and shortly after takeoff it crashed and she was killed. Jaye said it was a very sad day for them as she was such a nice instructor and admired by them all.

After all her training, Jaye enjoyed flying planes to the various bases for the fighter pilots to fly into combat. She had many adventures to tell us about those missions of hers too.

Another thing she commented on was that she learned to drive a Bedford truck with all its double de-clutching. Well, I remember those as I learned to drive in a Bedford truck too when I was in my late teens when I joined the Civil Defense. We learned First Aid, of-course, plus some mechanics, which I have found useful over time, and we had to learn to drive a four-stretcher ambulance (like on the TV show M.A.S.H.) – the Bedford truck. That was quite an experience, so I knew how Jaye must have felt learning in the same type of vehicle.

Jaye joined the WAAFs and was in it for 8 months before being called up to join the ATA service. (They were called the "ATA Girls"). One day after war broke out she received her pilot's license. She was 23 year old at the time. And when in the WAAFs she was stationed at Kenley near London. Dave told her that that was where he was living at the time. What a coincidence that they were both living in the same community and now they are living near one another again after all these years.



Mo and Jaye together



Left to right: Tony Salotti (Ontario member) climbs up to look inside the pilot's cockpit. Rob, our Australian Rep (left); Mo; Couple friends of Rob's Mo enjoying dessert. Tony with wife Carol & Michel Rossignol our Ottawa member at dinner.

As I am sure that our readers know females weren't allowed to fly in combat and so they were permitted to deliver the planes to the airbases instead.

The next event that happened for our Canadian Spitfire Society members was at weekend trip to Ottawa. I was taking one of my usual bi-annual vacations of visiting my son and family in Ontario. I decided that this was an excellent opportunity to extend my trip and to fly out to Ottawa and gather a group together for a Spitfire Society Weekend.

Our group of seven consisted of three members (including me), plus two family members and two friends. We had arrangements made for two tours in two aviation museums.

First we went to see the Vintage Wings of Canada Museum in Gatineau owned by Michael Potter. I am sure that name is well known to most of the readers. Dave O'Malley arranged to meet us there and give us the tour which was wonderful. Dave writes some fantastic articles about aviators and which appear on the web. The detailed tour was terrific.

Following that visit at vintage wings we all went back to Ottawa and had dinner together at a lovely restaurant suggested by one of our guests who lives there in the city. The chatter about our day was the main topic at the table.

The next day we all met at the Canadian Aviation & Space Museum on the outskirts of Ottawa. We had arranged there for a tour of the Storage Hanger. That may not sound interesting, but it was. There were so many aircraft in there that the normal visitor to the

museum never sees. At the end of the tour the young fellow who had been our guide said that he found it super interesting taking our group around as he learned a number of items that he didn't know about, that we did and now, he said, he had more to tell other groups about when conducting future tours. That felt such a nice compliment.

Prior to leaving to fly to Ottawa, when I was still at my son's in Hamilton, I took a taxi over to visit the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum near Hamilton Airport. As pre-arranged I met with Rob Nieuwenhoven, his wife and friends. Rob is the Australian Representative of the Spitfire Society and it was the first time for us to meet one another. He and his group were vacationing in North America. He was super keen to see the Lancaster aeroplane that is at the CWH Museum. His wish came true and we even saw it being taken back into the hanger after being outside. I think they were contemplating it taking a flight that day, but decided against it. When I lived in Ontario I frequently saw the Lancaster flying overhead. Neat stuff!

As readers may know, the Silver Spitfire has started its Around the World Flight, starting August 5th until December 8th. Efforts are being made when it is over North America for Tony Murray, our American Representative of The Spitfire Society to get to see it when it touches down in Tererboro in New Jersey for 2 days and I am hoping to be able to get over to Paine Field in Washington State when it is hosted there by Heritage Flight for 2 day period. But all that is another story.



Miles for the Few 2020



Vice-President
Yvonne Malan DPhil (Oxon)



Yvonne Malan was born in South Africa and educated at New College, University of Oxford. Her research interests include post-conflict reconstruction and transitional justice. She is the founder of the prestigious Bram Fischer Memorial Lecture at the University of Oxford. A former Oxford 'Blue', she is a keen runner, cricketer and boxer.

Yvonne will as part of her role be raising the profile of her relative, the late Group Captain Adolph Gysbert 'Sailor' Malan, DSO & Bar, DFC & Bar. 'Sailor' Malan was one of the most outstanding Spitfire pilots and leaders within the Royal Air Force during the Second World War.

Yvonne will be running a number of races in 2020 to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, 110th birthday of Sailor Malan and to raise money for the Society's Spitfire Fund campaign. Please donate generously through the link or button below and we'll keep you updated of her progress.

[http://spitfiresociety.org/
content-Miles-for-the-Few>About-Us](http://spitfiresociety.org/content-Miles-for-the-Few>About-Us)

Donate with PayPal button

Commonwealth Air Aces of the Second World War © IWM (CH 8119)

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT



1

There's a great selection of gifts and official merchandise available from the Society shop, for all the details, options and prices go to <http://shopspitfiresociety.org/>

6



2

5



3



4

- 1: The Spitfire Society mug £20.00
- 2: The Spitfire Society Aksel2 A3 or A2 poster £8.00 - £10.00
- 3: The Spitfire Society Spitfire Fund Unisex Hoodie £25.00
- 4: The Spitfire Society pack of 10 Aksel Season's Greetings A6 greeting cards £12.50
- 5: The Spitfire Society Aksel1 A3 or A2 poster £8.00 - £10.00
- 6: The Spitfire Society Spitfire Fund A3 or A2 poster £8.00 - £10.00

The SECRET SPITFIRES *Director's Cut*

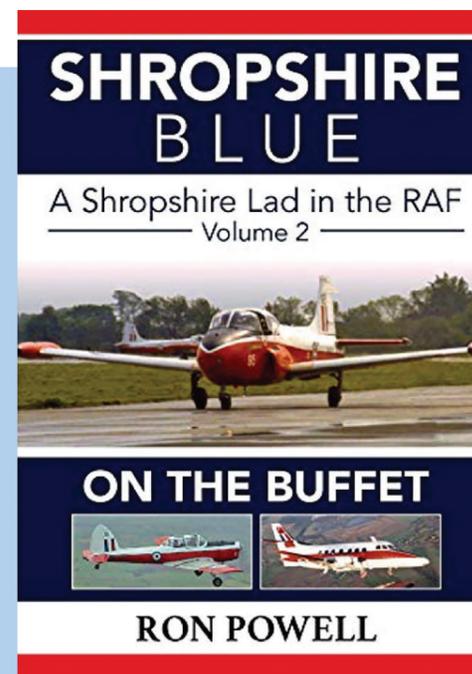


You can now order the Secret Spitfires Director's Cut DVD. It contains the feature length documentary as seen in cinemas along with over 15 minutes of extra footage, a Special Booklet of all the secret Spitfire locations and a subtitle facility.

Available now from our online shop

The Spitfire Society supported this film financially and the profits from the sale of this DVD will assist in our charitable objectives.

If you've ever wondered what it would be like to train as an RAF pilot, this is the book for you.



Following on from Preparation For Flight, this second volume of memoir follows Ron's progress during the run up to first solo and on to the thrills of spinning and aerobatics, the advanced skills of navigation and formation flying, and his personal demon, flying on instruments.

Much of the time it seemed that no matter how hard he worked on the ground, he just couldn't produce the results in the air. And yet, after three demanding courses, he gained his wings and could look forward to flying on the front line. Available through Amazon.

More detail on Ron's RAF career, public talks and samples of his writing can be found on his website: www.ronpowell.co.uk.

TB752



'the Manston Spitfire'

By Robert Westbrook and Paul Zec



TB752 entered service with 66 Squadron after handover to the RAF at 33 M.U. (RAF Lyneham). She was first flown operationally by Pilot Officer Richard Edwards from B.85 Schjindel, Holland. This first sortie saw her airborne for 1 hour 50 minutes on a bomber escort to Dulmen.

On 25th March 1945 when returning from a patrol, Pilot Officer Dennis Hugo was unable to lower TB752's port undercarriage leg and was diverted to B.78 (Eindhoven) for an emergency landing. Hugo escaped without injury but TB752 was classified as Cat. B damaged and was sent to 409 Repair and Salvage Unit for repair.

During her 6-day sojourn with 66 Sqn, TB752 flew 12 operational sorties in the hands of 4 pilots. Of these, only Flying Officer Marvin Silver would fly TB752 again as he also transferred to 403 Sqn RCAF.

Top main picture: TB752 outside at Rochester nearing completion

Top inset: TB752 handover ceremony post-restoration by MAPS

Above: Dennis Hugo 66 Sqn (c. mid-1944)

Left: Squadron Leader Zary in TB752 at Deipholtz 403 Sqn RCAF

Far left: Bob Young logbook sketch

On the 16th April 1945 a refurbished TB752 was ferried to Diepholtz, Germany and entered service with 403 'Wolf' Sqn R.C.A.F. TB752's service with 403 Sqn was destined to be somewhat more eventful than that with 66 Sqn the previous month. In the hands of 403 Sqn she would claim no fewer than four enemy aircraft, flying 26 sorties by war's end in the hands of 11 different pilots.

The first of these aircraft was to be claimed by Squadron Leader Henry 'Hank' Zary DFC of Manhattan. On the 21st April 1945, he took off at 14.55 hrs on an Armed Reconnaissance mission. At approximately 16.30 hrs he and his wingman, David Leslie (who also flew TB752), sighted a pair of Messerschmitt Bf 109s. They gave chase to these aircraft and Zary's combat report states:



"I was KAPOK leader on an Armed Recce in PARCHIM area. When returning, I sighted 2 Me. 109's apparently attacking ground targets. They were climbing, when we gave chase. They climbed to about 7,000 ft. and I closed on the starboard aircraft telling F/O. LESLIE to take the port one. Closing to 600 yards, line astern, I opened fire with a 4 second burst to 400 yards, strikes cutting a third of starboard wing and fin and rudder off. Strikes were also observed on the cockpit and the aircraft crashed out of control. F/O. A. A. ROY confirms this report. Gyro sight and cine camera used. I claim one ME. 109 DESTROYED."

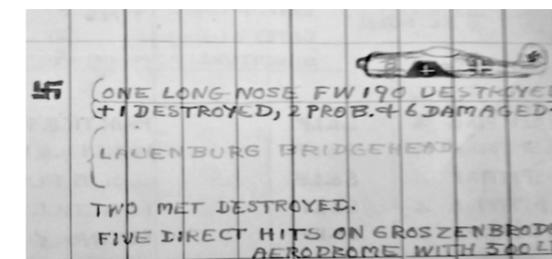
TB752's second 'kill' was to come 4 days later on 25th April. This time the aircraft was flown by Pilot Officer David Leslie, who had been wingman at the time of its first victory, destroyed a Focke-Wulf 189 reconnaissance aircraft. P/O Leslie's combat report states:

"During a low-level attack on TRAVEMUNDE aerodrome I was flying black three and sighting what I believed to be a FW.189 on the edge of the drome I gave it a three second burst of Cannon fire, seeing numerous strikes mainly concentrating on the engines. It immediately burst into flames and I kept on firing until I had to pull up a bit to avoid hitting it. Flak started to come at me from across the harbour so I had to break off the attack and re-join the formation. I claim one U/I aircraft (believed to be FW.189) destroyed. Gyro sight Mk. IID and Cine gun used."

The aircraft's third victory came on the 1st of May 1945 when being flown by Pilot Officer Bob Young. This time the opponent was a Focke-Wulf 190 'D'; this model was fitted with an inline engine, necessitating a longer nose. Young's Combat Report states:

"I was flying KAPOK Black four on a six-aircraft patrol over the LAUENBERG Bridgehead. Controller reported bandits in the area. Two or three seconds later we engaged four and I saw eight more flying tight formation on my starboard. We approached from below and the FW190s jettisoned two bombs each. While turning behind my No. 1 to engage one, one turned directly in front of me at about two hundred yards. I gave him a three second burst and the cockpit started smoking. He rolled on his back at 1500 ft. and on the way down did an aileron turn, piling into a field below on a thirty-degree angle. There was no explosion on impact. I then climbed back up and found nothing other than our six Spitfires circling the area. We had to return to base due to shortage of gasoline. Cine gun and Gyro sight used. I claim 1 FW 190 as Destroyed."

Young proudly recorded the incident in his RCAF logbook even sketching his opponent.



The Manston Spitfire's final victory was to come on 3rd May 1945 when flown by Pilot Officer Frederick W. Town, known as 'The Orilla Kid.' Town's combat report states:

"While flying on patrol as Kapok Black Leader, Kenway controller sent me to look at shipping in LUBECK Harbour. While in LUBECK Area Controller Skallawag vectored me to an enemy aircraft. I spotted an HE.111 at 0 feet flying north west from LUBECK. I immediately attacked from astern giving a 2-second burst from 200 yards. Strikes were seen in the fuselage and it went straight in. Gyro sight fitted and cine-gun used. I claim 1 HE.111 as Destroyed."



This action was later immortalised in 1985 by renowned aviation artist Michael Turner in a painting aptly named 'Final Victory'. The Museum has copies of this print available that were signed by Town on one of his visits to TB752 in the 1980s. The museum still has copies of this print available for purchase.

TB752's last operational flight with 403 Sqn took place on 18th June 1945 in the hands of P/O Bob Young carrying out a practice display. The following month the aircraft was returned to England to be stored at 29 M.U. (RAF High Ercall). She remained in storage at RAF High Ercall until she was allocated to two Flying Refresher Schools (102 and later 103 F.R.S.) where she was flown by a number of pilots. By November 1953 she had been flown to No.5 Civilian Anti-aircraft Co-Operation Unit at Llanbedr. She served in Llanbedr for just a year before being flown back to No. 33 M.U. at RAF Lyneham where

her flying career ended. As she had originally been handed over to the RAF at No. 33 M.U. it was rather fitting that she would end her flying career there. She was stored for a year before being selected to take part in the classic film 'Reach for the Sky'.

After hearing that a number of Spitfires were being disposed of following the filming of 'Reach for the Sky', the station commander at RAF Manston (Grp Cpt Oldbury) made enquires as to whether one of these aircraft could be saved to serve as Gate Guardian at RAF Manston. As a result of these enquiries TB752 arrived at RAF Manston in the autumn of 1955 to commence her career as the station gate guardian and her now 64-year history with the airfield. At this time Manston was also home to the USAF.

In late January 1970 the RAF took the decision to remove TB752 as a gate-guardian at Manston and use her as a source of spares for other Spitfires. This decision was reversed after the Chief of the Air Staff, former Battle of Britain pilot Sir John Grandy, was made aware of the strength of feeling among the local population.

By the late 1970s the aircraft was beginning to show signs of over two decades worth of exposure to the elements and the decision was taken to restore the aircraft for static display purposes.

On 7th July 1978, TB752 was taken by road to the experienced team of volunteer engineers of the Medway Aircraft Preservation Society Ltd at Rochester Airport. These men were given the task of restoring her to static display condition and despite working in less than ideal conditions they completed her to an exceptionally high standard. She was initially painted in her 66 Sqn Colours bearing the codes LZ-F but this was later changed in favour of her more striking 403 Sqn R.C.A.F. scheme coded KH-Z.

Following her return to Manston in 1979 it was decided to fundraise for a building in which to house the newly refurbished TB752.

This building was funded by the people of Thanet, using a 'Buy a Brick' donation scheme.

Opened in June 1981 the Spitfire Memorial was looked after by personnel from RAF Manston. She still calls this building 'home' today and has been on continuous public display for the last 38 years, always being looked after by a dedicated team of volunteers.

TB752 was joined in 1988 by Hawker Hurricane II.C LF751 (Displayed as BN230) and the current building was extended to include a second display hall and gift shop. This aircraft was also comprehensively restored at Rochester by the talented engineers of The Medway Aircraft Preservation Society Ltd.

With the arrival of the Hurricane the museum became The RAF Manston Spitfire & Hurricane Memorial Museum that we know today.

When RAF Manston was sold to civilian operators in 1999, a civilian Trust took over the running of the Museum. By 2006 both aircraft had been taken off charge with the RAF and were transferred into the administrative care of The RAF Museum Hendon. They form part of the National Collection and are regularly inspected by their expert collections staff to ensure they will remain on display for many years to come.

In addition to the two aircraft and the stories of their pilots, the museum boasts a comprehensive collection of wartime artefacts and exhibits. These include a rare War Office Type 1 fire tender and a tribute to the famous 'Channel Dash' of 1942.

The Museum offers free entry to the public (although all donations are greatly appreciated) and is open 7 days a week from 10AM (closed between 24th December and 2nd January and Mondays during January and February).

In 2017, the museum Trust decided to construct a Spitfire Simulator modelled around TB752. The Simulator was built by volunteers and funded by donations from various individuals, groups and companies.

The result of this effort was opened to the public as 'The Manston Spitfire Experience' to celebrate the centenary of the RAF in April 2018. The experience gives visitors a chance to gain an insight into the challenges of flying a Spitfire and has so far been enjoyed by approximately 3000 people.

The experience carries a charge of £30 for a half hour session with a trained instructor and on completion 'pilots' receive a certificate that entitles them to a £200 discount on a flight in a real Spitfire with our friends at the Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar.



Left: *Final Victory* by Michael Turner
Above top: *Flight Lieutenant CL Rispler in front of TB752, May 1945*
Above middle: *Pilot Officer Bob Young 403 Sqn RCAF*
Above top: *Flying Officer FW Town*

Sources used:
66 Sqn Operations Record Book
403 Sqn Operations Record Book
The Manston Spitfire by Lewis E. Deal M.B.E
The 2nd Tactical Air Force, Volume Three: From the Rhine to Victory January to May 1945 by Christopher Shores & Chris Thomas.

Down Under

Rob J Nieuwenhaven

The Spitfire Society Australian Representative



Not much happening Down Under at the moment in the Spitfire area but there is a fair bit of warbird activity nonetheless. My wife and I were VIPs at the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society's (HARS) museum at Albion Park (near Wollongong) two weekends ago and were lucky enough to see the Grumman S-2G Tracker fly in on its first flight in 21 years. We also had a tour through their B747-400 and sat in on an engine run in the airworthy AP-3C Orion. This, the Catalina and Neptune will all be at RAAF Edinburgh next month for the air show. HARS maintains almost all of their aircraft in airworthy condition, so it's a place I really love. I'm looking forward to seeing the RAAF Museum's Spitfire and the Pay Hurricane in the air together at Edinburgh, too.

I managed to catch up with our Canadian rep, Mo Patz while my wife and I were in Hamilton recently. We met at the excellent Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum where we were lucky enough to see their B-25 fly. We also saw their airworthy Lancaster towed back into the hangar, where we were able to get a good close look around it. Mo gave us a good run-down on the Spitfire XVI displayed there – it needs some love but it doesn't actually belong to the museum, so they can't work on it. I'd enclose a photo of Mo and me but I've realised they're all on Mo's camera!

We also went to the Museum of the US Air Force – a must-do if you're anywhere nearby. Interestingly, two of the aircraft there weren't actually in US service but were ex-RAAF: the Spitfire VC and the Beaufighter! There's also a USAAF Spitfire XI on display. The museum covers everything from the first powered flights through to several stealth aircraft currently.

I have list of Australian Society members but there are a good number of holes in the information. Most phone numbers are not valid and there are few email addresses. I can't liaise with you if I don't have an email or mobile number, so please email me at australian-rep@spitfiresociety.org or ring me on 0408 219 268 to update your details. Ideally, we'll meet somewhere where a few of us are able to travel to. Like Canada, Australia's a big place and distance will stop a lot of us meeting up but a regular email contact would go a long way to keeping us

all on the same page. I'm also trying to catch up with the President of the Spitfire Association, as both organisations essentially perform the same role, however the Association has more members here than our Society does.

If you have any ideas on how we can grow our Society in any way here, please let me know. Email is usually the best way to reach me and I'll reply to you as quickly as possible.

I'm looking forward to the RAAF Edinburgh air show next month. I'll be working on the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society's and Gliding Federation of Australia's stands, so if you see me there, please introduce yourself. You won't miss me – my surname's on my RAAF uniform!



Not long after Lord Beaverbrook became Minister for Aircraft Production in the National Government led by Winston Churchill from May 1940, he came up with a cunning plan to encourage war savings and to promote the idea of the Spitfire as a national emblem of defiance. As a result of a letter from Canadian Sir Harry Oakes asking how much it would cost to sponsor a Spitfire, Lord Beaverbrook declared that a

Hampshire's Gifts of War

By Paul Beaver Artwork courtesy of Jon Freeman

nominal £5000 would secure a Spitfire named in honour of the donor. The idea instantly caught hold, and, in all, 1,500 Spitfire were funded through the scheme, which today has its descendent in the Society's own Spitfire Fund.

In 1940, Hampshire, the home of the Spitfire and Supermarine, had a population of nearly one and a half million people, many engaged in the aircraft or shipbuilding industries. It was also home to a number of multi-millionaires who found the green and pleasant county to be the right distance from London for the ideal country seat.



Spitfire Mk. IIa 'The Clan'



Spitfire Mk. Va 'Bournemouth II'



Spitfire Mk. Ia 'Gosport War Weapons'



Spitfire Mk. Vb Trop 'Stockbridge' blue



Spitfire Mk. Vb Trop 'Stockbridge'



Spitfire Mk. Ia 'R.J. Mitchell'



Spitfire Mk. Vb 'King Rufus'



Spitfire Mk. Vb 'The Andoverian'

Amongst the noble Lords was Lord Rotherrick of Tilney, a shipping magnate who had already made his merchant ships of the Clan Line and Union-Castle available to the Ministry of War Transport. He was one of the first to donate £5000, in October 1940, and asked that his machine should be named 'The Clan'. It duly was and a Mark IIb was delivered to RAF Tern Hill on 17 May 1941. It saw initial service with No 145 Squadron and is credited with a Bf 109F destroyed over France. Like so many Spitfire Fund machines, it did not see out the war and was destroyed in a training accident on 10 September 1942.

Some children even emptied their piggy banks and others conducted penny trails

Hampshire's long history allowed individual funds to be set up in market towns and villages giving ordinary people the opportunity to be involved. Often overseen by the Editor of a local newspaper or a local mayor, they collected monies from on a regular basis, often recording the individual donations to encourage more giving. Some children even emptied their piggy banks and others conducted penny trails. In the New Forest, enough money - £10,939 - was collected to buy two Spitfires. One, the 'New Forest' served with No 54 Squadron for just two and a half hours, being shot down on its first sortie. Such was the pace of the air war in 1941.

The 'Andoverian', named for the Hampshire town and its Canadian and American coun-

terparts, fared much better, seeing out the war, but still ended its life on the scrap heap on 21 June 1947. It was delivered on 10 September 1941 and was flown as top cover for the Channel Dash on 12 February 1942, where it was damaged by cannon fire.

Another gifted Spitfire, 'Stockbridge' was sponsored by the small village of that name in the Test Valley. It was one of those machines which were sent to Malta and flown off HMS Eagle on 10 February 1942 being flown by many pilots, including the ace Flying Officer Johnny Plagis with No 126 Squadron. It was the mount of several other 'aces' but it lasted only a few weeks, being shot down between Grand Harbour and Kalafrana on 2 April. The Spitfire was destroyed but the newly arrived American volunteer pilot, Pilot Officer Dave McLeod survived.

Of the 14 Spitfires funded by Hampshire, none is now preserved which seems strangely sad for the county which can claim to have created the world's most iconic aeroplane.



Spitfire

REVIEW



Manston Spitfire and Hurricane Memorial Museum's Spitfire Simulator

I received a delightful invitation from Robert Westbrook (Trustee of the Museum) to undertake a test flight in their Spitfire simulator and discuss areas where the Society and Museum could co-operate for mutual benefit.



Spitfire

The Simulator is contained within a cut down Spitfire fuselage with exterior screens that are connected to a fully integrated set of controls in the cockpit. Access was relatively easy with some steps involved and the vision forwards was just the same as a tail wheel aircraft sitting on the ground, very little! Robert proved to be a calm and able instructor taking me through an introduction to the controls and guiding the course of the flight.

I was set the challenge of flying underneath the bridge

I took off from Biggin Hill Airport and climbed towards central London and orbited around the Shard before setting course for the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge at Dartford. I was set the challenge of flying underneath the Bridge, little did they know that I had done this for real before but in a different aircraft, at another Bridge, a story for another time. Having completed this exercise, I climbed up in preparation for a touch and go landing at Rochester Airport. My approach was fairly good but yawed off the runway due to my lack of experience with the control harmonisation but managed to take off again. I undertook some aerobatic manoeuvres including a victory roll and loop. My final landing was at Manston Airport, my approach over Herne Bay was reasonable and completed a three-point landing, a considerable improvement on my previous effort.

Overall, I thought the simulator was very accurate and good value compared with a real flight that would cost several thousand

pounds more and you got to undertake take offs and landings that you wouldn't be allowed to in a real Spitfire. As with most things you would need to build up your experience of the controls and I had the benefit of prior experience of flying Chipmunks to guide me but Robert provides expert guidance for those with less flying experience. I would like to have seen the ability to undertake some aerial combat to give another dimension to the very accurate flying simulation.

The Museum has offered special discount to Society members and I would thoroughly recommend taking the opportunity up. The normal price is £30 for 30 minutes and you'll receive a certificate which also entitles you to £200 off a Spitfire flight at the Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar. We'll be looking to promote the Museum to a wider audience and possibly having some joint events in 2020 to commemorate the Battle of Britain anniversary, so keep an eye on our website and social media channels for further details.



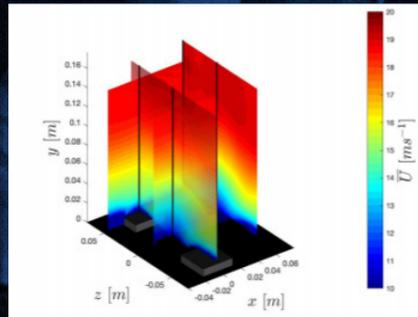
To book visit:
<https://www.spitfiremuseum.org.uk/simulator>

Use code SPITSOCI5 during checkout to receive your 15% off the normal price.

A Rough Year, My Annual Review

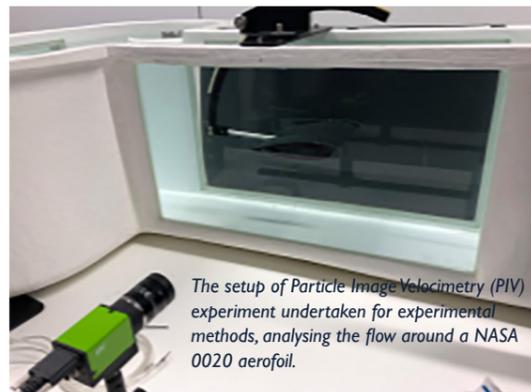
Tom Griffiths

First and foremost I would again like to thank everyone at The Spitfire Society for their generosity. The bursary has allowed me to purchase a new computer which helped alleviate the problem of the ever decreasing storage endured by my laptop. This has also aided me greatly during the write up of my individual project, a large part of my third year.



An example of the processed PIV data collected. (Flow in the x direction.)

My first semester modules included Aerothermodynamics, Aerospace Design and Control and Experimental Methods in Aerodynamics. Aerothermodynamics mainly focused on supersonic flows and the shock waves that occurred as a result of interactions with different bodies within the nozzles. Aerospace Control, on the other hand, was an introduction into various control systems, their block diagrams, transfer functions and assessing their stability with the aim of creating a basic system that could be utilised in an autopilot system as an example. My other module, Experimental Methods, had a large practical element involving three experiments analysing the flow over a NASA 0020 aerofoil at different angles of attack. Each experiment featured a different measuring apparatus, comparing the results achieved. A lab report was required to compliment each experiment which, although challenging, greatly aided my technical writing, a useful attribute to carry forward to my Individual Project (IP).



The setup of Particle Image Velocimetry (PIV) experiment undertaken for experimental methods, analysing the flow around a NASA 0020 aerofoil.

The IP is a full year module in which research must be undertaken on a particular topic. My personal area of research was analysing the drag penalty over two rough surfaces, multiscale in nature. The intention of the research was first to identify certain surface parameters through experimentation and then try and identify any possible relations seen between these parameters. If a relation could be found, it would provide the possibility to analyse a baseline surface and

then apply mathematical relations based on the experimental findings to predict the effect of sprinkling on smaller elements of surface roughness. The first semester was largely used to prepare for the experiment, including the manufacture of all the roughness tiles which would be used to tile the floor of the wind tunnel's test section. This was completed in good time which allowed experimentation to commence shortly after my semester one exams. The experimental process was an intense two week period in which eight planes of Particle Image Velocimetry data was collected, required to capture the boundary layer above the surfaces.



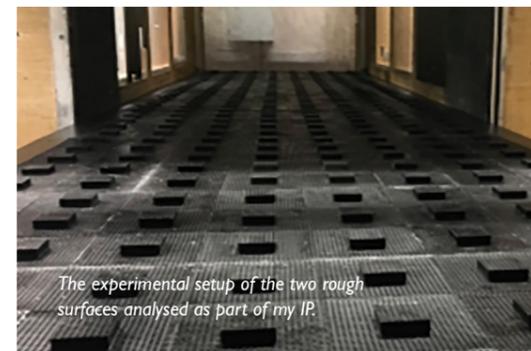
Models of Concorde, my chosen aircraft. Left: The baseline mode. Right: A model with various parameters altered, for example the wing span has been increased.

Wing Aerodynamics and a computer based exam which looks at optimising aircraft performance parameters simulating the scenario of a customer presenting their requirements for which we must select the best means of propulsion for example. As part of this module also, a chosen aircraft must be modelled for which the geometry can be modified, again, replicating the conceptual phase of aircraft design.

Overall the year has been both exciting and challenging with much learnt, especially regarding experimental work. Before I proceed into my final year I will be taking a placement after a successful application to Scuderia Toro Rosso Formula One team. Whilst there, I will be working within their aerodynamic department firstly learning the ropes before hopefully contributing my very own part to the car.

Overall the year has been both exciting and challenging

Although I am hugely excited for this opportunity, I will miss my summer job of the previous five years working on the boats and instructing on sailing at my local yacht club in Seaview.



The experimental setup of the two rough surfaces analysed as part of my IP.

After a slow start (due to a faux pas with the power switch of one of the pieces of apparatus...) the experimentation was a great success and all data was collected. After a short processing period the data could be analysed. While the data did allow a suggestion for the required relation to be presented, naturally, some scepticism surrounds this result due to the small data sample and the unrepeated experiment.

With this work almost complete, my attention moves towards the semester two exams. These include Aircraft Structural Design,



John Stanborough Bates 1929 - 2019

John Bates volunteered for RAF aircrew in late 1946 and flew solo on 30 July 1947 in a Tiger Moth. He was selected for further training in Southern Rhodesia and then progressed to the last Spitfire conversion course at RAF Stradishall.

Having completed his conversion course John was posted to 80 Squadron flying the Mark 24 in Hong Kong with plenty of opportunities to practice ground attacks, interceptions and low flying. Whilst in the Far East he converted to Sunderland flying boats operating from Japan in support of the Korean War.

The remaining part of his RAF service which lasted until 1983, involved being a flying instructor; flying Vampires, Jet Provosts, Canberras, Valiants and Victors in numerous roles including air to air refuelling.

For his 90th birthday his family organised a visit to Duxford which featured the actual Victor he flew a circumnavigation of the world and Spitfire TE184 flew in, this was an aircraft he flew whilst undertaking his original Spitfire conversion course.



Spitfire Study Day at Biggin Hill 24 March, 2 June 2020



Come and see a legend at close quarters



www.historicaltrips.com

There is no aeroplane more iconic than the Spitfire. Called by many the saviour of the Free World, especially during the Battle of Britain, this sleek design is frequently seen at air shows around the world. This is your chance to get up close and personal with the fighter at one of the world's leading Spitfire operators - and at the famous Battle of Britain fighter station, Biggin Hill.

We will study:

- Design and development, discussing new research into the origins
- The role of the Spitfire in the Battle of Britain
- The fighting power of the Spitfire
- The engineering of the wing design
- The stories of the brave men who flew from RAF Biggin Hill

Where we'll be:

There can be nowhere better to study the Spitfire than the former RAF Biggin Hill in the 80th year of the Battle of Britain. The facilities of the Heritage Hangar are world-class and afford a privileged access to Spitfires under maintenance, re-build and flying. The hangar tour will be conducted by one of the engineers who spends every day with these magnificent machines and he'll be able to answer the most in-depth engineering questions.

Included is a free copy of SPITFIRE EVOLUTION, signed and personalised by the author Paul Beaver and the opportunity to buy a small commemorative mug of the day.

Lectures:

Paul Beaver will lead the discussion on the Spitfire throughout the day, focussing on the study areas. The advantage of the Heritage Hangar is that much of the lectures can be illustrated with real examples from the engineering shop floor.

Tour Guide:

Paul Beaver is a well-known historian and broadcaster who continues to research the Spitfire. He spent six years flying Spitfires in

six European countries. He regularly lectures on his experiences to lay and expert audiences, including at the Battle of Battle Bunker in Uxbridge. Paul has recently been appointed Honorary Group Captain of No 601 (County of London) Squadron, Royal Auxiliary Air Force, which flew Spitfires during and the immediately after the War. He is the author of two major works on the Spitfire, is a member of The Spitfire Society and lectures regularly on the development and service life of the world's most iconic aeroplane.

Itinerary:

- 10.00 - Meet at Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar
- 10.15 - Introduction lecture by Paul Beaver
- 11.00 - Coffee Break
- 11.15 - Go behind the scenes with a tour of the hangar by an engineer who works with the Spitfires
- 12.30 - Buffet style lunch in the hangar
- 13.30 - Paul Beaver lecture
- 14.30 - Sit in a Spitfire Photographer John Goodman will take photographs (chargeable)
- 15.30 - Spitfire engine start up
- 16.00 - Day will finish

Lectures

The Spitfire and the Battle of Britain Biggin Hill and Spitfire operations Wartime developments to the Spitfire

The day costs £175. Contact Debbie Paton, debbie@specialistjourneys.com

Gordon Monger

1925 - 2019

Gordon Monger, who has died recently aged 93, worked as an aeronautical engineer and spent his entire career working for Supermarine and its successor companies.

Gordon was Born in 1925 and grew up in near Winchester, living initially in Bullington and later Longstock. He spoke fondly of his childhood and growing up in the countryside. As a young child he earned pocket money by catching rats. He would check the rat traps he had set along the hedgerows before going to school, collecting the tails and taking them in his satchel to convert later into cash.

During the war Supermarine experimental flight test was relocated to HMS Kestrel, Worthy Down, a bicycle ride from Gordon's home. This is where he began working for Supermarine in January 1941 as a fitter's mate. When he arrived on his first day, he discovered that his hours of work were 7:30am to 7:30pm, there was little electricity, no heating, no toilet, no water, it was dark, and freezing, but there were a number of glorious Spitfires and other aircraft in the hangar. George Harris started one week later and they remained friends for life! Gordon served his apprenticeship as a fitter erector at Worthy Down and later at the experimental hangar Hursley Park, mainly working on prototype Spitfires, Seafires and Spitfires. He was amazed that by the time he was sixteen he was fitting upgraded engines and propellers and performing other modifications on these experimental aircraft, often helped by a fourteen year old.

In addition to training in the various experimental machine shops he also spent time working in the production Spitfire machine shop which had been relocated to Shorts Garage, Winchester after Southampton Works was bombed. After completing his apprenticeship in 1946 he then went on to study Aeronautical Engineering at Southampton and Aeronautical Science at Cranfield College of Aeronautics and later qualified as a chartered aeronautical engineer.



While completing his studies Gordon continued to work for Supermarine with various stints at Hursley Park and Chilbolton. During this period, he worked on the Seagull and a variety of other experimental piston and jet aircraft. After this he began work as a design draughtsman, designing parts for various aircraft. He then moved to the Aerodynamics section of the Technical Office where amongst other things he was focused on aerodynamic loading and aero elastic distortion of high speed swept wing aircraft.

After completing his studies Gordon returned to the Flight Test Technical office focusing on stability and control, performance, engineering systems, and armament trials of the Swift and Scimitar. He conducted this work at Chilbolton, Wisley, and Libya for the tropical trials.

From 1959 to 1965 Gordon worked on the TSR2 project and was based at Wisley, Warton, and Boscombe Down. He was responsible for determining the flight test programme and developing test and analysis methods and instrumentation requirements for the project. When the TSR2 was cancelled by the Labour Government, Gordon, like many others who worked on the project, was dismayed with how quickly materials from the project were scrapped and often wondered what could have become of this promising aircraft.

After the TSR2, Gordon moved to passenger aircraft still based at Wisley. Initially he headed a section responsible for the development and certification of the engineering systems on the 400 series BAC 1-11. He then headed a section which was responsible for the testing and certification of the coupled approach and automatic landing systems on the Super VC10 and 500 series BAC 1-11. He often mentioned that one of the highlights of his life was receiving a phone call to notify him that a VC-10 had successfully landed for the first time in thick fog at Heathrow, completely controlled by automated systems.

The final aircraft that Gordon worked on was Concorde. He was responsible for the testing and certification of the navigation and other systems on the aircraft and flew on the aircraft.

After aircraft, he spent the final decade of his career working on the development of ballistic missiles, in particular the Chevaline upgrade to the Polaris missile system. When he retired Gordon had worked for the same company for nearly fifty years.

In 1971 Gordon married Judy Mansbridge, daughter of Spitfire designer Ernest, whom Gordon had indirectly worked for earlier in his career. Gordon and Judy designed and built a house near Cirencester where they have lived since they were married.

Gordon was a keen mountaineer and enjoyed visits to the Lake District and climbing in the Alps. He climbed several of the highest mountains in Europe, including Mont Blanc and the Matterhorn. When he retired, he took up cooking, art (painting), pottery, youth sailing instruction, led walking groups and kept fit with walking. Gordon died on 16th February 2019 and is survived by his wife, son and three grandchildren.



Spitfire People

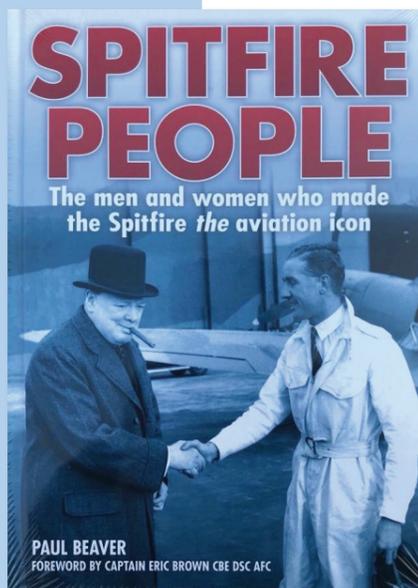
The men and women who made the Spitfire the aviation icon

by Paul Beaver

Published to mark the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, this book presents a fresh angle on the Spitfire by examining the contribution to its development and achievements by over 65 people, some famous, others not.

Paul Beaver is a historian, broadcaster and commentator as well as an historic aeroplane pilot.

Paul was appointed as Vice-President of The Spitfire Society in 2019. £20.00



Spitfire Evolution

by Paul Beaver

Paul Beaver has written an accurate and concise story of the remarkable development of the Spitfire.

The artwork and technical plans by Jon Freeman bring the story to life and illustrate how this aircraft was revised technically to meet the challenges of opponents and the rigours of naval use. £12.50



Forgotten Few

Naval fighter pilots in The Battle of Britain

by Paul Beaver

Forgotten Few is a homage to the 57 naval pilots who flew in the Battle of Britain. For 20 years, the Admiralty and the Air Ministry did not recognise the valiant efforts of these young men – now historian Paul Beaver has compiled their biographies and explains the award of the coveted Battle of Britain clasp. £9.95

All titles are available from the Society shop:
<http://shopspitfiresociety.org/>



Set of Spitfire coasters in hand crafted Welsh slate

A beautiful set of four hand crafted Welsh slate coasters featuring different views of the iconic Spitfire. Now available within our Ebay store.

These will look fabulous at home/work, a great talking point and extremely hard wearing so you'll be able to enjoy them for years to come.

They all have felt bottoms to avoid damaging surfaces and the top side has a beautiful texture as you can imagine.

They will be securely packaged and sent directly from the person who created them by hand to your door.

Dimensions are a diameter of 10cm and a depth of 0.5cm.

Available on the Society website for the very reasonable price of £25 per set. InSlate will make a donation to The Spitfire Society for each set sold. They are also available direct from Numonday for £20 per set.

Numonday direct:

<https://www.numonday.com/product/supermarine-spitfire-coasters-deep-engraved-welsh-slate-set-of-4/>

The Few'

By Edward Shanks | 1892 – 1953



I Prelude

*Now is this the last stronghold, defended only
By a frail handful of thistledown machines,
And now depends on these strange, unknown young men
Our inmost life.*

*But surely we have known them,
Our sons, our nephews, friends of our sons and daughters,
Gay and amusing, welcome in our houses
We knew them when the stronghold was their play-ground,
Young men to whom their land had given her plenty . . .
Tea on the airfield lawn, the light bird-chatter
Of young girls dressed like flowers, the casual flip,
Taking a dozen counties in its span,
The sports-car back to town, the cocktail bar,
Dinner, a show, the dancing and the laughter. . .*

*Till Cinderella's midnight, when the gong
Called for a change of lights, the flower-hues faded,
The bird-chatter was stilled, and they stood out,
Changed to our eyes in the livid glare of danger,
Separate in their blue, strange and unknown.*

II The Fighter-Pilot speaks

(but not aloud)

*I am not gone so far away
That, even in my battle-place,
Through rifted cloud I cannot see
Spread dim below me England's face.*

*The woods that look like clustered weeds,
The chessboard fields, the pin-point spires,
Sun on familiar windows, even
Faint smoke of autumn garden-fires.*

*Since this I ride is English air,
I have not gone so far away:
From this new world I still can see
The world I knew but yesterday.*

*And I can see beneath my feet
The paths where not so long ago,
Before the summons came to me,
Your feet and mine were wont to go.*

*O new-wed wife, I am not far!
Even from the garden that we knew
You yet may see my frozen trail
Looped white across the blue.*

III Battle

*The time will come when Ocean shall resume
His ancient sovereignty upon this isle,
When all our glories shall deep-plunged be
Under a lonely sea,
And wide across this many-peopled room
The waves will roll again, mile on blue mile.*

*Then, not till then, the tale shall go untold
Of how the cloudy battlements were manned,
How when the gathering thunders rolled
And all the world else stood apart,
We waited, trusting in a little band,
We waited, taut and breathing close,
Till, when those vultures came to peck our heart,
Proud as a flight of swans the fighters rose.*

IV Triumphant Threnody*

*This was their kingdom, the air, and it bore them like kings,
And they were the shield for us all who dwelt under their wings.*

*Brief had their lives been until then, nor much longer endured,
But just for so long as the need, till the end was assured,
This they gave up as a ransom, that we might go free,
Richness of days not yet lived, all the fullness to be,
The joy of life's long slow achievement, the race and the prize,
The peace of the ultimate evening, before the light dies.*

*All this they burnt up in a moment, the young men, the kings,
Who guarded this land in that hour by the might of their wings.*

*No gift have we now we may give them that weighs
what they gave,
But the clouds of our skies shall entwine them the wreath
for their grave.*

*Threnody: genre of poetry and song, mourning the death of a person or people, similar to a lament.