

# Old Timers

Compiled by Peter R March and Paul Fiddian

A round-up of historic aircraft display and restoration news

## Thunderbolt from the blue

The former IWM Duxford-based P-47D Thunderbolt *No Guts - No Glory!* is returning to the UK. Active with The Fighter Collection (TFC) for twenty years, it left for the USA in mid-2006 but has now been purchased by Graham Peacock and restored to the UK register as G-THUN to his new company Fighter Aviation Engineering Ltd. A powerful and agile performer, *No Guts - No Glory!* was, for two decades, the sole example of Republic's heavyweight single-seat WWII fighter active in European skies.

Built in 1945, P-47D 45-49192 was delivered to the USAAF that same year and briefly used as a trainer before storage at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma. Sold to the Peruvian Air Force, it had periods of frontline and training use from 1953 to 1967. The Thunderbolt was repatriated, along with five others, by Confederate Air Force Colonel Ed Jurist, arriving at Harlingen, Texas, in September 1969. Registered N47DD, it flew again in 1973. It was painted as 226641 *Grumpy* of the 527th Fighter Squadron (FS), 86th Fighter Group (FG) USAAF.

N47DD went to David Tallichet at Chino, CA in 1975, joining his Yesterday's Air Force and was soon allocated to the Kansas



PHOTO: PETER R MARCH

Wing, where it was repainted to represent the 62nd FS 56th FG Thunderbolt flown by Kansas-born WWII ace Colonel David Schilling. In January 1980, Robin Collard of Del Rio, Texas, bought the aircraft but it crashed on its delivery flight after its engine failed. The damage was extensive but in new owner Jon Ward's and later Jim Kirby's hands, the Thunderbolt was resurrected. Completed by Fighter Rebuilders, it was flown again at Chino in August 1985. Now owned by Stephen Grey/TFC, less than six months later, on 22 January 1986, it arrived at Duxford and was back in the air on

**ABOVE: P-47D *No Guts - No Glory!* seen here at Duxford's first Flying Legends airshow in 1993. Will it return for the event's 25th anniversary this July?**

24 February. It was repainted with the distinctive chequered-cowl, MX-X code and markings of Lieutenant Colonel Ben Mayo's personal machine when assigned to the RAF Duxford-based 78th FG's 82nd FS. For the next twenty years, it made many memorable appearances at airshows including the first Flying Legends Air Show at Duxford in May 1993.

The Thunderbolt returned to the USA in mid-2006, passing briefly through the hands of Provenance Fighters in Las Vegas before joining the Millville Army Air Field Museum, New Jersey, in January 2007. Confirmation of *No Guts - No Glory!*'s acquisition by Fighter Aviation Engineering came via the CAA's UK register entry of 28 February 2018. It is likely that the P-47 will join Graham Peacock's Anglia Aircraft Restoration warbirds, which include Fury SR661, Tempest V JN768 and Spitfire Vc EE602 (see 'On the Move'), based with Air Leasing at Sywell. Might we see this rare WWII fighter displaying once again at the 25th anniversary Flying Legends at Duxford in July?

**Report: Paul Fiddian**



PHOTO: PAUL FIDDIAN

**LEFT: *No Guts - No Glory!* was for two decades, the only P-47 Thunderbolt active in European skies**

## Henstridge happenings

Cessna 195B N999MH owned by David Ponte has recently returned to Henstridge in South Somerset after being repainted by Fly Moore Aviation in a new cream and darker blue colour scheme at Dunkeswell, Devon. The vintage 1949-built Cessna 'Businessliner' now looks more in period with its new 'art deco' finish.

Also at Henstridge, the rebuild of Miles M2H Hawk Major G-CCMH is making progress although it will be going shortly to the Southampton area for some work on the undercarriage and wheel spats, before it is flight tested and returned to owner José Chicarro Villar in Spain as EC-ABI.

It had been brought to South Gloucestershire as a basket case by Tim Cox in 2003, with the aim of restoring the 1935 vintage aircraft to airworthy condition with a new fuselage. It was registered G-CCMH on 20 October

2003 to José's friend John Potheary who will make the first post-restoration flight later this year.

Another notable vintage aircraft that will be leaving Henstridge in May is Tom Leaver's Travel Air 4000 NC5427, which will soon be crated ready for transport to the USA where it will join the 2018 American Barnstormers Tour. This event starts on 5 July at Jefferson City, making its way across various states including Iowa and South Dakota before finishing at the EAA AirVenture show at Oshkosh three weeks later. Hopefully Tom will bring it back to the UK in the autumn.

The LAA Wessex Strut is again hosting its annual fly-in at Henstridge on 29 April. Following on from last year's successful event, the strut has invited all the LAA test aeroplanes from recent years and hopes to put as many on display as possible. Locally-based Aircraft Coverings will be giving aircraft fabric covering demonstrations throughout the day.

**Report: Neil Wilson**



PHOTOS: PETER R MARCH

ABOVE: The newly-repainted vintage Cessna 195B N999MH has returned to Henstridge

BELOW: Work is progressing on Miles Hawk Major G-CCMH, here in front of Tom Leaver's Travel Air shortly to leave for the USA



## Wherefore a Boulton Paul Balliol T2?

Although some 230 examples of the Boulton Paul Balliol, the last British Rolls-Royce Merlin-engined aircraft, were built from 1950-55, there are only three complete survivors worldwide. As Nigel Hitchman discovered on a recent visit to Sri Lanka, two of these advanced trainers (CA302 and CA310) are displayed at the Sri Lankan Air Force Museum at Ratmalana AB near Colombo. The Royal Ceylon AF received a dozen Balliol T2s in 1957, five of which were taken from the RAF's unwanted fleet of 196 aircraft. The RAF Museum at Cosford has Sea Balliol T21 WL732, one of thirty delivered to the Fleet Air Arm for pilot training and the last to fly in the UK in February 1969.

Designed after the war to replace the Harvard as the standard RAF and FAA advanced trainer, the first Balliol T2 was flown seventy years ago on 10 July 1948. While production and deliveries were under way, the Air Ministry decided to adopt the Vampire T11 as the RAF's advanced trainer. Only 7 FTS at RAF Cottesmore



PHOTO: NIGEL HITCHMAN

ABOVE: CA310, one of Sri Lanka's two preserved Balliols, once flew with the RAF  
BELOW: Cosford's Sea Balliol, the only complete example of the trainer on display in the UK



PHOTO: PETER R MARCH

was equipped with the Balliol for pilot training. Other units, including No 288 Squadron at Middle Wallop and 238 OCU at Colerne, also flew the Balliol until early 1957. The whole fleet was subsequently

sent for scrap with just a handful of cockpit sections later 'rescued' by enthusiasts. One of these (WN149) was rebuilt by the Boulton Paul Aircraft Heritage Project at the former BP factory at Fordhouses. Unfortunately, the site was closed in 2013 and the nearly complete Balliol went to RAF Cosford where it remains stored. There is also the cockpit section of Balliol T2 WN534 at the Tettenhall Transport Heritage Centre at Wolverhampton, along with the fuselage of WN516.

While it is good to see in this RAF centenary year a Balliol displayed at RAFM Cosford, it is undeniably a naval aircraft with its folding wings, rather than a fixed-wing T2. Some years ago, there was a suggestion that the Shuttleworth Collection was looking at the possibility of obtaining one of the Sri Lankan Balliols and restoring it to flying condition at Old Warden. The aircraft in question, CA310, does have a strong link with the UK as it was originally built for the RAF as WG224. Bought back by Boulton Paul in 1957 it was registered as G-APCN on 12 May 1957 and sold to the Royal Ceylonese AF as CA310 before departing three months later.

**Report: Peter R March**





PHOTO: TIMBADHAM

## Coventry's Dakotas move on

Significant Douglas Dakota activity has been taking place at Coventry of late. A major project milestone was reached on 13 February when one of the Warwickshire airport's airworthy examples, refurbished over several years, was gifted to the Indian Air Force to join its Vintage Flight. The gift deed-signing ceremony was conducted in New Delhi. There, the Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Birender Singh Dhanoa PVSM, AVSM, YSM, VM, ADC, was presented with the relevant papers and deed by Member of Parliament Rajeev Chandrasekhar who obtained the Dakota in 2011. His father, Air Commodore (Retired) MK Chandrasekhar, who had been an IAF Dakota pilot, was also present.

Built in 1944, this Dakota served with the RAF as KN397. After disposal it was registered G-AMSV and operated by numerous independent airlines including British United, Macedonian Airways, Skyways Cargo and finally Air Atlantique.

To honour the first Dakota which transported troops of 1 Sikh Regiment to Srinagar on 27

October 1947 during the Kashmir conflict, the aircraft has been painted in IAF camouflage colours and allocated the Indian Air Force serial VP905. It will be named *Parashurama* and in due course join a Tiger Moth and Harvard in the IAF's Vintage Flight at Hindon Air Base, Uttar Pradesh. The Dakota was, in mid-March, still in the UK, at RAF Benson, while crew training and final preparations are completed for its long ferry flight to India. This is likely to take place in the second half of April.

RVL Aviation's (ex-Atlantic Air Transport) RAF Transport



PHOTO: TIMBADHAM

TOP: **This refurbished Dakota was gifted to the Indian Air Force Vintage Flight in mid-February...**  
 ABOVE: **...and wears Indian Air Force camouflage with the serial VP905**

Command-liveried Dakota 'KK116' (G-AMPY) had not flown for some time but, on 16 February, was airborne at Coventry. In the late afternoon sunlight, it performed several missed approaches at East Midlands Airport before heading back to its base. G-AMPY's re-emergence is reportedly contract work-related. Meanwhile, restoration continues on C-47A 42-100521 *Night Fright* which, by mid-March, had been undergoing major internal structural work and was being prepared to have primer applied to its bare metal fuselage. The WWII veteran is being restored for future operation with the Membury Airfield Memorial Flight and will hopefully be able to participate in June 2019's D-Day 75th anniversary events.



PHOTO: ANDREW MARCH

**RVL's Dakota KK116 (G-AMPY) taxiing out to fly again at Coventry on 16 February**

## Propshop Spitfire PT462's 'new look' emerges at Duxford

Enthusiasts at IWM Duxford on 22 February 2018 were treated to a unique sight when John Romain brought his recently acquired Spitfire T9 back to Duxford repainted in RAF wartime colours but carrying its civil registration G-CTIX. Owned by Anthony Hodgson for nearly twenty years and operated from a private strip in North Wales, G-CTIX was registered to John Romain's company Propshop Ltd last October following its arrival at Duxford for annual servicing. With this completed, the former single-seat Spitfire HF IXe PT462 was flown to Kidlington where it was stripped back to bare metal and repainted by Pete Medley of Flying Colours in the overall scheme that it wore when operating with the Mediterranean Allied Air Force in early 1945.

Back at Duxford, the detailed markings that had been closely



PHOTO: COL POPE

researched by ARC engineer Col Pope were being applied in mid March. After completion PT462 will carry its original No 253 Sqn code SW-A, worn when it was a Spitfire HF IXe flying from Treviso, North Italy in April 1945. It will

**Repainted Spitfire T9 PT462, its civilian registration prominently displayed, returned to Duxford on 22 February**

have unusual small code letters (as was the case) and they will be in the off-white colour used in this theatre of operations, together with a red spinner. The No 253 Sqn badge will be displayed within a white disc on the fin top.

After the war, PT462 went on to serve with the Italian AF from 1947-1952 and the Israeli AF until it was retired in 1956. Its remains were recovered from Israel by Robs Lamplough in 1983 and sold to Charles Church at Micheldever, Hants where it was rebuilt by Dick Melton as a two-seat T9. First flown as such on 25 July 1987, it remained at the airstrip near Winchester after the untimely death of Charles Church until sold to Jet Cap Aviation in Florida in 1994. Four years later, it returned to the UK after purchase by Anthony Hodgson/Dragon Flight.

**Report: Peter R March and Col Pope**

## Mosquito build breakthroughs

In the Royal Air Force's centenary year, the prospect of its best-known twin-engined WWII fighter-bomber's return to British skies has been given a major boost. The People's Mosquito (TPM) has contracted East Sussex-based Retrotec to build and test the Mosquito it hopes to have in four or five years' time. The agreement represents a significant advancement for the project, based on the remains of No 23 Squadron's Mosquito NF36 RL249, which crash-landed on RAF Coltishall's perimeter on 14 February 1949. While harnessing RL249's remnants, TPM's reproduction will be an FBVI variant. "From the outset, Retrotec was top of our list", TPM Managing Director John Lilley enthused. "We share a passion for returning a Mosquito to UK skies, but we also want to celebrate and raise awareness of what an outstanding example of British aeronautical design this aircraft was; an aircraft that was built by



PHOTO: PETER R MARCH

small enterprises up and down the country."

The Mosquito Pathfinder Trust is also working to create a flyable UK-based example and has teamed up with world-leading Mosquito authority, New Zealand's Avspecs Ltd, to make it happen. Mosquito BIV DZ542, the trust's chosen airframe, was built at Hatfield and entered RAF service, equipping No 618 Squadron, in April 1944. Later that year, it was modified to

become a test platform for Barnes Wallis's 'Highball' bouncing bomb. Still thus configured, it was shipped out to Australia in 1945 and stationed at RAAF Narromine, New South Wales. From storage at that location, it was discharged from service and moved to a local farm, where it remained for decades. DZ542 resurfaced in the late 1980s, when it entered Glyn Powell/Mosquito Aircraft Restoration Ltd's ownership.

**British Aerospace's Mosquito T3 RR299 – seen here at Boscombe Down in June 1992 but tragically lost four years later – was the UK's last airworthy example**



## On the Move

**Fairey Junior G-AMVP** is a unique and delightful new addition to the Real Aeroplane Company at Brighton. Flown up from Bembridge, via Sywell, by RAC co-owner Tony 'Taff' Smith on 24 February, it touched down after a 4hr 40min flight in the fading afternoon sunlight.

Designed by EO Tips at Avions Fairey, Fairey Aviation's Belgian division, the diminutive Junior was first flown in 1947. Just two were built and 'VP, the second, was the only example placed on the UK civil register. Test pilot Peter Twiss, who had set a new World Speed Record of 1,132 mph in the Fairey Delta 2 the previous year, could not have been in a more contrasting type's cockpit when, in 1957, he landed the Junior on HMS *Ark Royal* as a publicity 'stunt'. The lightplane's long-term owner was Alan Wershat, in whose care it resided for over fifty years.

The Fighter Collection's **Hawker Sea Fury T20 WG655**, was airborne at IWM Duxford on 22 February for the first time in over five years. The 1951-built former RN two-seat trainer and West German AF target tug has now been fitted with a Pratt & Whitney R2800 engine with a four-blade propeller in place of its original Centaurus driving a five-blade propeller. TFC-owned for a decade, WG655 was previously flown by the RN Historic Flight at RNAS Yeovilton from 1976 until 14 July 1990, when it was seriously damaged in a forced landing not long after take-off. The aircraft was deemed a write-off but its remains



PHOTO: ANDY WOOD

RAC co-owner Tony 'Taff' Smith brought the one-off Fairey Junior to new home Brighton after a long open-cockpit winter flight from Bembridge

ended up in the USA where it was reconstructed first by Kenosha, Wisconsin-based Chuck Greenhill's team and completed by Sea Fury specialists Sanders Aeronautics, with Brian Sanders conducting 24 May 2005's post-restoration reflight. Purchased by TFC in 2008, it was reintroduced to the UK air display scene at Flying Legends the following July.

Both Sywell-based Buchóns are now in the marketplace. Air Leasing's airworthy **Hispano HA1112-M4L 'Red 11' (G-AWHC)**, which was airborne last November, having been restored by Air Leasing after its arrival in January 2016, is a new addition to Platinum Fighter Sales' (USA) inventory. The asking price, \$1 below \$6m, reflects its uniqueness as the sole-surviving two-seat Buchón of only two built. **HA1112-M1L Buchón 'White 9' (G-AWHH)** is now listed for sale on Air Leasing's website, as is **Spitfire Vc EE602 (G-IBSY)**. Both currently



PHOTO: AIR LEASING

ABOVE: Anglia Aircraft Restorations' Buchón 'White 9', which Air Leasing is restoring to fly, is for sale

BELOW LEFT: TFC's re-engined Sea Fury T20 was airborne twice on 22 February in the hands of Pete Kynsey

BELOW RIGHT: Graham Peacock's Spitfire Vc EE602, which was flown after restoration at Biggin Hill in May 2015, is now for sale at Sywell

registered to Graham Peacock's Anglia Aircraft Restorations, the price of each is available upon application. 'White 9' has been with Air Leasing for restoration since 2017. Built in 1958, it gave the Spanish Air Force seven years' service before, once pulled out of storage, starring in 1968's *Battle of Britain* movie ('Red 11' was also involved, being used in an airborne filming role).

Dating from 1942, EE602 is a Westland (Yeovil)-built Spitfire that, equipping Nos 66 and 129 Squadrons, flew some 100 WWII



PHOTO: COL POPE



PHOTO: PETER MARCH

missions. After three-plus years' restoration at the Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar, it flew again in May 2015.

Hot on Puma HC1 XV208's heels (see 'Old Timers', Spring edition), came the Newark Air Museum's very latest addition. Lorry-loaded **Chinook HC1 ZA717's fuselage** was transported from RAF Cranwell – where it had been in long-term storage – on 22 February. The entire acquisition process, from purchase, through planning, to arrival, was completed in barely ten days. Now positioned alongside the Puma, outside Hangar 1, the former No 78 Squadron heavy-lift helicopter is the first Chinook to have joined an independent UK aviation museum's collection. ZA717 entered Royal Air Force service on 23 February 1982 – (coincidentally) almost exactly 36 years pre-Newark delivery. On 25 July 1989, it was written-off during a post-maintenance test flight at RAF Mount Pleasant, in the Falklands Islands. Two of its five crew members received

minor injuries but the Chinook was a write-off and consequently became an RAF Loadmaster training aid. It will remain in an educational role at Newark but now for the benefit of school children, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts.

The RAF *Red Arrows* announced the retirement of **Hawk T1A XX227** – the last of its founding fleet of Hawks – on 16 February 2018. Built by Hawker Siddeley at the Kingston-upon-Thames factory and first flown at Dunsfold in mid-1978, XX227 was the 62nd production Hawk. Delivered to the RAF on 14 July 1978, it joined the *Red Arrows* for their first Hawk display season on 6 February 1980. Converted to T1A standard in 1985, it had flown 8,077 hours and made 13,855 landings during its forty years' service. 'Red 1', Squadron Leader Martin Pert, was at the controls of XX227 for its final aerobatic flight, before he and other members of the team signed a farewell message on the aircraft's side.



PHOTO: PAUL FIDIAN

Chinook HC1 ZA717 – a UK preservation first – became the Newark Air Museum's latest arrival on 22 February



PHOTO: PETER R MARCH

The *Red Arrows'* last original Hawk (XX227) was retired at Scampton on 16 February

## Normandy Victory Museum's Thunderbolt gate guardian

While Europe's skies have a flying Thunderbolt inbound, a dummy example has been put on display at Northern France's recently-opened Normandy Victory Museum. The full-size P-47D stands adjacent to the museum's outdoor car parking area and is fully visible from the busy N13 Route Nationale leading to Cherbourg that passes beside the museum's site. Considerable fighting took place in that part of Normandy following the D-Day landings of June 1944, and the museum is dedicated to remembering what is locally called the 'Battle of the Hedgerows'. The museum's setting is intrinsically historic, being located on a part of the site of the A-10 Carentan Advanced Landing Ground (ALG), which was used by the 50th Fighter Group of the US Army Air Forces following the D-Day landings.

The museum itself opened in May 2017, on the exact site of the former Normandy Tank Museum, which was also specific to the D-Day landings. The Thunderbolt, of



This near-complete dummy P-47D now stands outside the Normandy Victory Museum

predominantly metal construction, has already proved to be a major advertising coup and has attracted much 'passing trade'. It is painted in the colours of the 50th Fighter Group's 81st Fighter

Squadron with the fuselage codes 2N-U, and appropriately it has full black and white 'Invasion Stripes' around its fuselage and wings.

**Report and photo: Malcolm V Lowe**