



Issue 18 - Feb-Apr13

Contrails

Newsletter of the Christchurch Aviation Society

Aviation Around Poole bay

Our January talk was from Kevin Patience who became interested in historical aviation when in the RAF at Malta he had dived on a sunken Spitfire and Maryland recovering parts of both. Kevin reminded us of Samuel Cody in 1908, but shortly afterwards William McArdle, who had owned a garage in Bournemouth, sold up to become Bournemouth's first aviator and jointly ran a school at East Boldre in the New Forest in the same year that Charles Rolls died in Bournemouth's centenary air pageant of 1910. The first Schneider trophy race following WWI was in 1919 on a triangular course from Bournemouth Pier across to Swanage, then to Hengistbury Head and back to the pier. The winning Italian team stayed in Poole Harbour but later the race was voided. After WWI famous manufacturers started up around the coast at Southampton and the Isle of Wight – Supermarine with RJ Mitchell and Saunders Roe being the most prominent. Meanwhile Alan Cobham started his company Flight Refuelling in 1934. The Shorts C Class flying boats had started a regular service from Southampton to the Empire and the aim was to cross the Atlantic for which the Shorts Mercury and Maia piggy back concept for transatlantic mail showed promise. However, later it was found that higher take off weights enabled direct flights. During WWII the flying boat operations on Southampton Water moved to Poole harbour and there Maia met her fate from a German bomber and was sunk in May 1941. In 1940 Poole harbour had been laid out with several air strips and now became very busy with the combination of Royal Naval Air Service at Sandbanks as HMS Tadpole, BOAC operations from Salterns Marina and the normal powered boat activity from companies such as British Power Boats and RAF Hamworthy. Flying boats / seaplanes now consisted of the Pan American Clippers, RAF Catalinas, BOAC 'Sunderlands' and Fleet Air Arm Walrus', Kingfishers and Fairey Sea Foxes. Aircraft casualties were inevitable in the Poole Bay area - a BOAC Catalina hit a log in March '43; other casualties included a Hurricane, Spitfire and Mosquito and in the surrounding areas a B17 at Lytchett Minster and a



Kingfisher over Poole Park

Halifax at Kingston Lacey and a He111 whose crew were buried initially in a local cemetery.

Early in WWII a new factory was built at Creekmoor, on the North edge of Poole Bay. The main output of this factory was the 20mm Hispano-Suiza cannon used in Spitfires and Hurricanes. Brownsea Island played its part by providing decoy fires, to give the impression of targets alight, to misguide bombers, and it also had gun emplacements facing the entrance to the harbour, some of which can still be seen.

As the war came to a close there was a return to Southampton operations and the last flight from Poole – to Durban – was on 12Mar47 with complete transfer to Hythe by March '48. So closed an eventful chapter in Poole's history. Throughout Kevin illustrated his talk with many photographs and anecdotes of flying boat stories down route.

Druitt Hall

The planning applications by the Council to demolish Druitt Hall were turned down but the hall is still likely to close at the end of March although work is in hand to try and prevent this. The Friends of Druitt Hall website will provide information at www.druitthall.info. Our meeting in May will be at the Priory House.

Boeing 787 Grounded

The FAA have issued an emergency airworthiness directive grounding the 787 following instances of lithium ion battery fires or ruptures. 787s have also suffered several other problems such as fuel leaks and false indication warnings. Also a review is in progress of the aircraft's design, manufacture and assembly.

Meetings List

- 06Mar13, "New Forest Remembers" by Gareth Owen Untold stories of WWII – the part the New Forest played - a Heritage Lottery Funded Project.
- 01May13, AGM followed by "Instrument testing the 110 and changes in the cockpit" by Peter Wells. How instrumentation has changed with regard to the effect of GPS.
- 04Sep13, "Flybe Operations", by Capt Robert Heath - tbc.
- 06Nov13 "Flight Data Recorders" by Steve Leaper from Curtiss Wright (Penny & Giles).
- 08Jan14 "Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance"

Other Events

Bournemouth Aviation Museum, 5th Annual Vintage Transport Day 3rd March 2013

Web site www.christchurchavsoc.co.uk

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