



# The Air League Newsletter

Issue 6: November/December 2011

## An Open Letter from The Air League to the new Secretary of State for Defence, Philip Hammond MP

*"Dear Secretary of State,*

We look forward to supporting you in your important new appointment, as we have encouraged and supported your predecessors since 1909. Mindful of the many challenges that face the Ministry of Defence following the Strategic Defence and Security Review, and the need to maintain as balanced and capable forces as possible within a significantly reduced defence budget, we urge you not to neglect the wider industrial and economic foundations of UK defence procurement. Obtaining the best equipment for our Services at the best value for the taxpayer must not be at the expense of continued investment in a world class sector that is vital if high-value exports are to be sustained in future years.

The aerospace and defence sectors remain the largest and most technologically advanced in the UK manufacturing sector, and they generate a disproportionate financial return on investment over the life-cycle of major programmes which can extend over three decades. Marks and Spencer or Nokia don't work like that. Extended defence timescales which encompass national research, development, design and manufacturing activities require strategic commitment and cannot survive periodic large-scale culling during short-term financial crises. Without the continuing support of HMG to UK designed and built programmes, with or without international partnerships, there will be no 'second chance' for the sector to recover, and no other industrial

sector is capable of creating such a massive contribution to the UK economy over such a long period.

With defence work worth over £22 billion last year, £9.5 billion earned in export sales and the sector providing direct highly skilled employment for over 110,000 people (plus another 314,000 employed indirectly), no other UK manufacturing sector comes anywhere near defence and aerospace in terms of generating sustainable wealth for the national economy. The specialist UK equipment supply chain, which is larger in revenue generation than the rest of Europe combined, has already internationalised itself and today serves a truly global market. But this 'national treasure' of an industrial sector is operating in an extremely competitive market, with new entrants in Latin America and Asia receiving massive incentives from their own governments (and in some cases UK Foreign Aid) to increase their market share. Without the wholehearted support of the UK government when it comes to supporting UK solutions for UK military requirements, there will be no exports to offer in the future. And that problem will be compounded if UK defence equipment is denied the ultimate bumper sticker – 'tried, tested and proven by HM Forces'.

**We cannot afford to let this happen."**

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# ANDREW HUMPHREY MEMORIAL LECTURE 2011

## ‘The RAF in 2020 and Beyond – Manning the Future’

**O**n 11 October Air Marshal Andy Pulford CBE, Air Member for Personnel and Deputy Commander-in-Chief Personnel, addressed Members and Guests of The Air League at the Royal Aeronautical Society, 4 Hamilton Place, London W1.

The full speech is available on the Air League website. This is a highly edited summary of the major points raised in his presentation.

“Let me begin by thanking the Air League for this opportunity to present the Andrew Humphrey lecture for 2011, and in doing so suggest that there is much in the scale of challenge and change being faced by the senior leaders of Defence and the Royal Air Force today that would be instantly recognisable by the great man himself from his own time at the top of his Service, as Director Plans, AMP, CinC STC or CAS. It is also a comforting reminder to Air Marshals of today, such as myself, that we have been here before – and survived!

“While on an historical theme, I remind you that on 1 Nov this year we mark 100 years of use of the aeroplane as an offensive weapon of war, when Lt Giulio Gavotti dropped 4 light bombs from his Taube monoplane over Turkish positions in what is now, yes you’ve guessed it, Libya! Of course, military air power has come a long way over a relatively short period of time since that simple beginning but the need for high-calibre and innovative individuals who can exploit technology’s potential in order to produce battle-winning capability is as true now as it was then, and will continue to be so to 2020 and beyond.



“My challenge as AMP, working together with my colleagues on the AFB, is how to sustain this capability edge, an edge which has allowed us to commit such a large proportion of our Force to operations, much of it in the case of Libya, at extremely short notice and with virtually no work-up training or mission preparation. I am confident that Operation HERRICK in Afghanistan is not the new archetype for conflict, but then neither is Libya. The UK will need to retain a broad range of Defence capabilities with utility across the spectrum of conflict if we are to be prepared for a wide variety of operations, ranging from an ability to conduct Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations, over-watch, air policing, partnering in training and capacity building, the provision of aid, and humanitarian relief, through to conventional war-fighting operations. A World in transition is likely to lead to greater instability.

We will continue to experience rapid urbanisation (by 2040, 65% of world’s population (6bn) will live in urban areas, up to 2bn may live in slums) which will increase

the likelihood of urban, rather than rural, insurgency. Continued climate change will almost certainly move the tipping point at which conflict ignites, although I do not personally dismiss it as cause of conflict in itself. There will be a diffusion of technology. With smaller forces available, we must expect to operate in places where we will no longer have a quantitative edge, and we can also expect to lose some of the qualitative edge that our equipment has traditionally enjoyed. Conflict will take place in 5 domains: sea; land; air; space and cyberspace.

“So what deductions can we make from this? The increasing frequency, scale and duration of humanitarian crises may well require the commitment of military Forces in non-combat roles. This, in turn, could propel them into volatile political situations where the humanitarian crisis itself or the presence of foreign forces becomes a trigger for conflict. The ability to move rapidly up and down the spectrum of conflict within a single force will be crucial.

“Partnerships will be more important than ever, to support upstream engagement and to secure access, basing or over-flight rights. Of course this is not a no-cost activity, and the need to apply sound judgment, mature diplomacy and statesmanship to our overseas relationships will be more important than ever – something we used to do very well but, sadly, something I suggest we have underfunded for some time.

“Future conflict will remain unpredictable and violent. It will also remain expensive and politically sensitive (increasing the need for working in a coalition) with all that this means for interoperability. Unpredictability places a premium on the ability of a force to react quickly to changing events – airpower with its speed and flexibility is the tool par excellence for responding to unpredictability, but as well as the equipment, the people also have to be agile and adaptable. This means maintaining a pool of people on high readiness and with sufficient training to enable them to cope with whatever the unpredictable may throw at them.

“As well as the unpredictability of where in the world we may be asked to operate, and the so what of climate, geography and language that goes with it, the character of the conflict in which we are engaged is also likely to be different. Studies suggest that the future operating environment is likely to be more constraining in a number of ways:

Complexity will abound, but also involving new domains such as cyberspace, the media and in space. Our enemies may have more sophisticated weapons (including RPAS and stealth technology) that will erode the freedom of manoeuvre we have enjoyed in recent years. They will also use the media more effectively to change the narrative to suit their ends and target alliance cohesion through the information space rather than the physical space of the battlefield. It may be more difficult to distinguish combatants from the innocent in urban spaces making it harder to find and strike them within the limits of international law and acceptable levels of risk.

“New technologies will constrain us as well as liberate us – just as with precision weapons, non-lethal technologies may well become the entry standard for ops, requiring additional investment at a time we are already resource constrained. These are all issues that need to be considered

*continues on page 7*

## Defence in a flat spin

**W**hile the recent Fox/Werritty media circus was underway in Whitehall, dominating every TV and radio news programme and front-page headline for over three weeks, Britain's overstretched Servicemen were quietly going about their duties, fighting a counter-insurgency campaign in Afghanistan and providing air support over Libya, many in the knowledge that they may soon be facing a redundancy note from MOD, informing them that their services are no longer required. It may appear more than tragic to many, that while the occupants of the Westminster Village divert so much effort into searching for clues in a not-very-compelling political drama, our national defences are entering a completely new era, in which the most basic military capabilities we have all taken for granted for so long, and which have been recognised by successive governments as being in the national interest, may soon cease to exist in a meaningful form. It doesn't help knowing that the most significant and far-reaching defence cut decisions, taken over a single weekend just prior to publication of the SDSR, did not result from lengthy well-argued debate, but were horse-traded under extreme Treasury pressure at the very last moment with the key involvement of members of the newly set-up National Security Council, known to have very little knowledge of defence issues or Service capabilities.

The immediate implementation of the most far-reaching SDSR decisions – ending both land-based and sea-based maritime air power – is quite hard to comprehend, bearing in mind these capabilities had been hailed by the Services themselves and Defence Ministers for the last decade or more as being absolutely key elements in the UK's national as well as global capability. Joint Force Harrier had demonstrated five continuous years of air support over Afghanistan, with outstanding levels of mission success, aircraft reliability and economy in operation. It was hailed as the ultimate example of joint service operations, but that didn't save it. Those involved knew that the single seat, single engine Harriers were cheaper to operate and had better and more up-to-date weapons, communications, sensors and avionics equipment than the older two-seat, twin engine Tornado GR4s that had replaced them. The only Tornado advantage was its ability to carry Stormshadow missiles, which were not needed in the Afghan campaign. The GR9s were like brand new aircraft, and the envy of the US Marines, with whom they had developed a very close partnership over 40 years. If the RAF didn't want them any more, despite the investment in upgrading them to GR9s, they should have been transferred to the Royal Navy to retain carrier air power in the transition to the new carriers. If money was so tight, then the Harrier fleet could have continued, supplemented with new-built aircraft, for a fraction of the cost of the F-35s. Equipped with a radar and the MBDA Meteor long-range air-to-air missile, an enhanced Harrier wouldn't need to be supersonic or stealthy. But it could have delivered a powerful capability and been affordable, and might even have been exported as an alternative to the F-35B. Such a programme could have generated a life-saving new UK military air programme, with another 20-30 years of sustainment in this country. What was missing was the imagination and political will to even consider such an option. Instead, 40 years of operational VSTOL experience was thrown away, along with perhaps 1,000 associated careers, and focus was frozen on the F-35 and nothing else, even if there is insufficient budget to buy the numbers needed to do the job.

The planned demise of the new Sentinel R1 fleet, which is proving to be a war-winning multi-service ISTAR asset, would seem to be a quite preposterous decision, from any angle, and it is to be hoped that wiser councils prevail between now and 2015, when



*ABOVE - An enduring public image of the SDSR as the Nimrod 4 scrapping was announced on BBC TV News.*

it is due to be scrapped (or more likely sold). There are deep worries that the SDSR cuts are far too deep to allow regeneration of capabilities or to sustain a home industry. The SDSR "default" position on off-the-shelf military procurement is clearly not thought through at all, as, if implemented, would soon result in a completely all-American supply chain, with the loss of sovereignty that would go with such a one-way decision. It would also close down what's left of the domestic industry. Expecting our allies to "fill the gaps" is dangerously wishful thinking. The Libya operations showed how even the USA can change its tactics after agreeing a policy, and most other NATO nations simply don't wish to go warfighting, even though they may retain larger front line forces than we do.

Aspects of the new Future Force 2020 air power vision leave many questions unanswered. For example, will the UK really be content to continue to have absolutely no long-range maritime air capability post-Nimrod? And can it make sense to have an RAF air mobility plan with nothing available between the Chinook and an A400M? And as a high proportion of Service recruits come from existing Service families, or have relatives in the Services, if morale continues to plummet, with traditional career prospects disappearing, how can the future look anything but bleak? However, the most serious fear post-SDSR comes from a realisation that those entrusted with the future of this country simply don't appear to understand what is at stake and how much irreparable damage is being caused. History will not be generous to those who ignore its lessons.

# DSEi 2011 – UK SHOWCASE

**S**eptember saw London's ExCel Centre host the world's largest defence equipment show, with international representation and new products, systems and services. Editor Richard Gardner, speaks to Gerald Howarth MP, Minister for International Security Strategy at the Ministry of Defence, and discusses the success of Britain's defence sector in the global export market.

**RG:** DSEi 2011 was the largest ever defence and security exhibition of its kind to be held in the UK. What was your overall impression of the show, and do you think it achieved its aims?

**GH:** DSEi was a huge success. Attendance was up by 16% on 2009. And with 75 international delegations from 55 countries, it was a tremendous opportunity to showcase the best of British Defence and Security sector.

**RG:** How important are defence export sales to the UK economy and Britain's defence commitments worldwide?

**GH:** For me, it's the other way round.

First and foremost, responsible Defence exports play a key role in promoting our foreign policy objectives as part of our approach to national security. By helping other nations with whom we have close relations to build up their own Defence and Security capabilities, we can contribute to regional security and help tackle threats to our own security closer to their source. Defence exports also leverage more influence in bilateral relations with our friends and allies than any other area of trade – not just through equipment, but through doctrine and training. Equipment programmes are becoming increasingly collaborative in nature, which can only serve to reinforce alliances and partnerships.

On top of this, Defence Exports make a significant contribution to the UK economy. The UK has maintained its position as the second largest exporter of new defence equipment for the last 10 years, and last year we increased our share of the global defence export market from 18% – 22% contributing £6 billion to our balance of trade. Exports also help to maintain over 300,000 British jobs, many of which are highly skilled.



*ABOVE - The BAE Systems Mantis Unmanned Air System has now become an Anglo-French partnership under the title of Telemos. It could become the RAF's Predator replacement, currently known as the Scavenger project.*



*ABOVE - The familiar Lockheed Martin F-35 mock-up (but no longer displayed as a VSTOL F-35B model) situated beside the main DSEi entrance, underlining the new tri-service flavour of this show, the world's largest international defence equipment exhibition of the year.*

**RG:** What UK defence programmes do you think will be of most importance over the coming years if defence exports are to be sustained, or increased?

**GH:** I see opportunities in all three domains. The Typhoon aircraft really came of age over Libya where it saw service for the first time in the ground attack role, making it a truly swing-role aircraft. Nothing beats proven operational capability, and we're seeing that reflected in a surge of interest world-wide. The Hawk, which I flew in August, also delivers state-of-the-art training with a proven platform. I am also excited about the Global Combat Ship and we are actively in discussion with nations who may wish to work with us on this programme, not necessarily to buy the ship but to co-operate, exploit, influence and possibly adapt the design. There have also been huge advances in recent years in protected mobility, personnel protection, and soldier systems – which again come with a "battle-tested" label. The Foxhound new light protected patrol vehicle is essential in the fight against the IED threat.

**RG:** The UK economy is facing a number of challenges resulting from the financial situation that is affecting Europe and North America in particular. Is the UK government committed to supporting long-term R&D investment through such difficult times?

**GH:** The UK is a world leader in scientific research which gives us a critical advantage over potential adversaries. It is saving lives on a daily basis. It can also help to deliver better value for money and is vital to our future economic success. That's why the UK Ministry of Defence commits £400 million a year to Science and Technology, a figure I expect to rise in cash terms in the coming years.

Science and technology is also one of the foundations of our bilateral relationship with India, a market of growing importance. So I was delighted that the UK's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory and India's Defence Research and Development Organisation recently signed an agreement for research co-operation.

# FOR DEFENCE EXPORTS

**RG:** The UK has developed and introduced some of the world's best-selling military aircraft of all time. With fewer new manned aircraft types in production today, do you see UAVs playing a growing part in future export activities?

**GH:** In Britain, we have recognised the growing operational contribution of Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS), formerly known as UAVs or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, for some time. RPAS-related spending has increased dramatically since 2005, largely in response to burgeoning requirements in Afghanistan. We will continue to invest in an increasing number of diverse RPAS projects to meet our enduring capability needs. Industry has a crucial role to play, and I expect that British industry will rise to the occasion by providing innovative solutions to ever increasing global demand for RPAS.

**RG:** The Eurofighter Typhoon has been actively supported by the UK government in the sales campaign to re-equip the Indian Air Force. With a long and strong track record in supplying UK designed aircraft to the IAF through partnerships with HAL, do you anticipate new opportunities to expand Anglo-Indian partnerships and technology co-operation if Typhoon is selected for MMRCA?

**GH:** Yes. There is a long history of successful Anglo-Indian partnerships and technology co-operation. The most recent example is last year's decision by the Indian Air Force to order an additional 57 Hawk Advanced Jet Trainers. The MMRCA competition offers an outstanding opportunity to build on this. The Typhoon partnership is made up of India's four largest European trading partners, the UK, Germany, Italy and Spain and each is committed to the development of that relationship through

increased inward-investment and partnership activity.

The procurement of Typhoon would offer an unprecedented opportunity for Technology Transfer and Industrial Participation, and would ultimately support India's aspiration to be self-reliant in the aerospace sector. For example the high tolerance advanced manufacturing techniques developed for Typhoon and F-35 could be used to develop future generations of indigenous aircraft. The recent agreement I just mentioned between DSTL and DRDO offers a solid foundation for such a relationship.



*ABOVE - Unguided air-to-ground rockets, launched from helicopters or strike aircraft, are effective and powerful weapons, but cannot be used where there is the danger of causing collateral damage to innocent people. New developments include the fitting of lightweight laser-guided target seekers which transform each rocket in a pod into a precision guided weapon, at a cost that is a fraction of that for existing precision ground attack missiles.*

*BELOW - Now you see it, now you don't. This demonstration of a new electronic camouflage system from BAE Systems involves the use of tiles which can be heated or cooled rapidly to match the background Infra Red signature. When the system is switched on, the vehicle (or helicopter or ship) becomes invisible to an IR seeker looking for a target.*

**RG:** How important are the Royal Navy's new shipbuilding programmes to future exports?

**GH:** The UK has a world-renowned ship-building tradition. We're seeing the fruits of that cumulative expertise in the Astute class submarine, the Type-45 Destroyer and Queen Elizabeth Class Carrier programmes, as well as the next generation of Royal Navy frigate, the Type-26 Global Combat Ship (CGS), which I mentioned above. GCS will draw on the expertise in design and manufacture of those programmes to deliver a world class maritime capability. GCS will also adopt modular design techniques, open system architectures in a flexible and adaptable core design which will offer a range of opportunities for international partnership. It will be truly cutting-edge.



# LEADING EDGE *update*

## AAIB Visit

*Victoria Earl reports*

On the 17th August, 15 members of the Air League were lucky enough to have the opportunity to visit the AAIB at Farnborough. We were first given a welcome brief and introduction to the AAIB. The AAIB was established in 1915 as the Accidents Investigation Branch (AIB) of the Royal Flying Corps. Now, the AAIB, which is part of the Department for Transport, is responsible for the investigation of all civil aviation accidents and serious incidents within the United Kingdom. The AAIB differentiates between accidents, whereby there is a fatality or serious injury and serious incidents, which are near misses.



The purpose of the AAIB is: “To improve aviation safety by determining the causes of air accidents and serious incidents and making safety recommendations intended to prevent recurrence”...It is not to apportion blame or liability. We were informed of different accidents and serious incidents that the AAIB have recently investigated as well as given the opportunity to ask any questions.

In the smaller hangar were two Gazelles, which had been owned privately and we were told of the reasons for their crashes. In the large hangar, were various types of aircraft; light aircraft, gliders, helicopters and a microlight. Each of the wreckage told their own story; some of which were known about by the Air League members.

The number of investigations currently taking place demonstrates the extent of the work undertaken by the AAIB and the detailed knowledge required of the investigators. The visit to the AAIB was extremely interesting and thoroughly enjoyable and I would like to extend my thanks, on behalf of the Air League members, to the AAIB for an exceptionally informative day.

## Brooklands Museum Visit

*Dipeet Mehta reports*

I would like to thank the Air League for the wonderful visit to the Brooklands Museum. It was a very knowledgeable experience to find out about life of Concorde. It was really exciting to get inside Concorde G-BBDG which was one of the test aircraft through which the permit to fly was given to the rest of the fleet, as well as knowing the technical aspects of materials and stresses it would face at 60,000ft nearly at the edge of space. With a take off speed of 250 knots, with 13 degrees pitch attitude I am jealous those days are over. We were also welcomed by Captain Mike Bannister who himself was a Concorde Captain sharing his experience and knowledge about his flying career giving many positive aspirations to make a career to fly. He was also very kind to take us to the Concorde simulator itself which was just like the real aeroplane. The day did not just end there; we had a bonus to try out the F1 simulators driving around original Brooklands race track where two of us Air Leaguers managed to break the record of some! In all it was a fantastic experience to have seen the Concorde in real life with its pilot sharing rather funny stories about it.



*Daniel Messinger*

I think I can speak for the group as a whole when I say that we had a fantastic day at the museum. Our tour guide for the day, Mike Bannister, gave us an in depth tour of the static displayed aircraft around Brooklands. It was fascinating to see intricately restored visual examples of the progression of aviation in such a short time in our country's' history all in one place. For me seeing the one Concorde still flying (the simulator that is!) was very exciting and it is a real credit to all of those who were involved in its restoration from its old home in Bristol including the restored “DG” as she glistened brightly in the afternoon sun. I would like to reiterate my thanks and appreciation to those at the museum who made the day very worthwhile and a special thanks to Mike for the photo opportunity in the cockpit of Concorde.

## Tayside Aviation and G-EVIE celebrate Women in Aviation

**H**ilda Hewlett learned to fly at the age of 47 and on 29 August 1911, she became the first British woman to be issued with a pilot's licence. On Bank Holiday Monday 2011, a celebration was held at Fife Airport to mark the centenary of Hilda's landmark achievement as part of a nationwide 'Women in the Air' day.

Tayside Aviation always employs a good compliment of female instructors together with G-EVIE, which was donated to The Air League by Evie Saunders to help young women in particular achieve their dream. Evie was 67 when she learned to fly and although she has sadly passed away, Tayside Aviation Managing Director Jim Watt said that "we get to see G-EVIE fly everyday delivering Air League Scholarships, and I am sure her spirit is uplifted by this".

Pictured here with G-EVIE are two former Flying Instructors now flying with Loganair - Senior First

Officer Almudena Rivas and First Officer Andrea Marco. They are both from Spain and they worked with Tayside as Flying Instructors before being placed as part of the Tayside/Loganair Partnership flying the SAAB 340. Also pictured are Flight Instructors Mellissa Van Geldere and Montse Mas.



### 'The RAF in 2020 and Beyond – Manning the Future' - continued from page 2

as we reshape for the future but despite the changing character of conflict, some things will be unchanging; one of which is the need to dominate the air. However, we must now in turn add the need for freedom of manoeuvre in space and cyberspace.

"So - what then for the Royal Air Force of the future? By 2020, the RAF will be a highly experienced Service containing a cadre of operational experience that is probably unparalleled since WWII. It will be smaller – 31,500 regular personnel, but these will work alongside a different mix of Reserves, civil servants and contractors all delivering operational effect on a shared mission. We will populate fewer, larger bases. Wherever possible, single-type basing, which will allow us to provide greater domestic stability for our people. We will have fewer but more modern fleets. The backbone of the Service will be Combat ISTAR with 2 FJ types (Typhoon & Joint Strike Fighter – shared with RN (58% RAF : 42% RN), and an ISTAR mix of Sentry E-3D, Airseeker and the SCAVENGER RPAS. There will be 2 Air Transport types (C-17 & Atlas/400M), sharing the tactical strategic role, and supplemented by the state of the art air-to-air refueller, the Voyager. Our Rotary Wing contribution will come from the ubiquitous Chinook Force and the updated Puma. With the fate of the RAF Merlins still eagerly awaited. But as you are all aware, we have had to make some difficult decisions with more to come (the planned retirement of Sentinel post 2015) and the OSD for Tornado later in this decade.

#### What is keeping AMP up at night?

"The SDSR period has been hard, and even though difficult decisions have had to be taken to lose aircraft types, the impact has been hardest on our people. At the psychological level, with over 50% of the redundees from Tranche 1 being non-applicants, we have eroded the sense of job security that was our commitment to them that acknowledged their unlimited commitment to the UK, including the expectation that they will lay down their lives in the course of their duty if necessary. I do not think that the psychological contract is broken, but it is certainly under strain.

"As I consider the attributes required for the Air Force of 2020 it is clear that aviation remains an international

brotherhood, hence our interest in maintaining exchange postings with allies around the world. We continue to need technically minded individuals who have the creativity to push technology to its limits and make measured judgements about exploring the performance envelope. And we need people with spirit and character who can take risks and work with ambiguity

"The work on the future environment suggests that we will have lost our quantitative edge and will have seen a blunting of the qualitative edge our equipment has hitherto enjoyed. This will place a premium on the edge that we derive from our people. We will, therefore, need to integrate the people dimension alongside equipment capability planning from the very beginning and to a standard not yet seen within MOD.

"It is clear to me that we will continue to ask more of our people in the future, both individually and collectively, but will also have to address the sticky issues of affordability and attractiveness. You will not be surprised to hear that as a result of the Future Reserves Study, the number of Reservists is set to increase considerably!

"In summary, the Whole Force Concept is not something to be feared, it is a true force multiplier, but it does need to be understood, and we do need to ensure we have the appropriate type of individual in the right place at the right readiness if the concept is to work correctly. I have talked of the reduction in Force size already, from 38,000 to 31,500 by 2020. We have already reduced intake figures as far as we dare. We will require redundancies and you will be aware that we have already announced Tranche One, with a further 2 tranches planned before 2015. This change undoubtedly erodes the concept of 'job security' – and we need to replace this with the idea of 'a job for life'. This will not necessarily mean a permanent job in the Armed Forces but a job that will provide the skills needed for life beyond service".

"The RAF of 2020 and beyond will continue to offer excitement, challenge, opportunities for personal and professional development and the chance for individuals to prove themselves in the most demanding environments. My challenge for the immediate future is to ensure people understand that".

# MEMBERS' NEWS

**Flt Lt Phil Bird**, who hosted the Leading Edge visit to RAF Valley in 2010, has just been awarded the position of 2012 Hawk Display Pilot, which proves that he is a gifted pilot as well as a super member of The Air League. We done Phil – we will cheer you on from the front of the crowd next display season.



ABOVE - Phil Bird (left) with Leading Edge chairman, Andy Perkins

**Courtney Challis, 2011 Bucklands Memorial Bursary Scholarship:** I would like to thank the Air League for awarding me the Buckland Bursary for 2011. The bursary has given me the opportunity to complete my tail wheel training with the Tiger Club. I thoroughly enjoyed flying their Piper Cub and know that the skills I have gained in doing so will be developed in my future flying. I really appreciate having the chance to be awarded this bursary.

**Harrison Lane, 2011 Swire Charitable Trust Flying Scholarship:** I am writing to thank the Air League and Swire Charitable Trust awarding me an Air League Scholarship. I completed my scholarship very quickly thanks to the fortunate weather! As soon as I returned home though I wished I had more time to fly! I do not have the opportunity to fly on a regular basis so it is times like this that fully re-ignite my passion for aviation and remind me that all of the hard work will be worth it when I hopefully become a RAF pilot in the future. Whilst staying at Wycombe Air

Centre it soon became apparent to me that they are amongst the best flying schools in the country; both in terms of the aircraft available but mainly because of the quality of instruction. It was a great privilege to be able to fly with them. I was taught to a high enough standard to be able to fly three solo circuits and learn how to plan and fly a navigation flight during my time there which I know will prove to be massively beneficial to me when I come to fly again in the future. I know that there is so much more to learn and that with the backing of an Air League Flying Scholarship I will be able to open many more doors in the future. I hope that I will be able to keep in contact with the Air League into the distant future and would love to get involved in anything else so that one day I too can offer the same to others. I am very grateful for the experience and look forward to meeting you again at the annual reception in London next year.

**Dipeet Mehta, 2011 HQ Air Cadets (The Air Cadets Scarman) Flying Scholarship:** I would like to specially thank Group Captain J Lawlor RAF for sponsoring me and the Air League for providing me 'my lifelong' ambition to be turned into a reality by presenting me with an Air League Flying Scholarship. I have had the best time of my life learning fly a Cessna 152. I received great instructions from Dan Munoz at Wycombe Air Centre without him solo would be impossible. Without this opportunity I could have not felt the freedom of the skies, thanks to the Air League I am the first ever person in my family to even fly and go solo. This has not only made me doubly proud but has given me a bonus motivation to work towards becoming an Airline Pilot an immense achievement. I had an excellent 9 days at Wycombe, very unreal to me, waking up each day and going flying, I can't express more how much I enjoyed it. My first solo

was the best part of it, Air League is a great it keep my dream alive. I would certainly say to anyone reading this, join the Air League feel the pride. Thank you ever so much again for granting me this I hope many like me who love flying feel the freedom of these beautiful skies.

**Dan Newson, 2011 Swire Charitable Trust Flying Scholarships:** I would just like to take this opportunity to thank you, the Air League and Swire Group for the flying scholarship that I have recently completed at Wycombe Air Centre. I had a thoroughly amazing time and enjoyed flying solo twice within my 12 hours. It was really good to meet fellow scholars during my time there and hope to see them again either at another Air League event or the Annual Reception. I would also like to encourage the Air League to offer rotary wing scholarships or bursaries. I love fixed wing flying very much and cannot wait to get up in the air again, however, I've always been fascinated with helicopters and would love to experience what it is like to take control of one.

**Ross Paterson, 2011 The MacRobert Trust Flying Scholarships:** I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for not only granting me an Air League Scholarship of 12 hours flying, but also giving me this chance to further my PPL/NPL training to a point where I hopefully will be able to fund the remaining hours required to complete it successfully. I would also like to take this time to praise the hard work and effort made by all the staff and instructors at Tayside Aviation, Dundee. They helped me greatly and improved my knowledge and understanding of general aviation, not just what is required to pass a PPL/NPL but also good aviation practices and without their efforts I would not been able to achieve what I did. Thank you once again for this wonderful opportunity to further my aviation career. Hopefully, at some point I can repay the faith that both organisations have shown in me.

## New Members

**Full Members:** Lauren Richardson

**Student Members:** Thomas Batchelor, Jonathan Childs, Jonathan Ciantar-Pisani, Dale Dawkes, Olivia Elmakenzie, Tariro Gobere, Ashish Gohil, Jacob Knight, Giles Lewis-Morgan, Georgina McBarnette, Dominic Paul, Faraz Sakur, Guy Trees

## Diary Reminders

18 November: Air League/British Airways Environmental Conference, BA HQ Waterside

30 November: Council Meeting, RAF Club

14 March 2012: Youth in Aviation, House of Lords

For up-to-date information on all our activities please visit our website at [www.airleague.co.uk](http://www.airleague.co.uk) where you can register for changes to be sent to you by email as they are announced.

  
**THE AIR LEAGUE**

**Broadway House  
Tothill Street  
London SW1H 9NS**

**Tel: 020 7222 8463  
Fax: 020 7222 8462**

**E-mail: [exec@airleague.co.uk](mailto:exec@airleague.co.uk)**

Editor: Richard Gardner  
Material for consideration for inclusion  
can be sent via The Air League's office.