



The Fly Navy Heritage Trust

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## FNHT Supporters' Newsletter

### ***A message from Admiral Terry Loughran CB, Chairman of the Fly Navy Heritage Trust.***

*"You will have all now heard and read about the outcome of the Strategic Defence and Security Review and how it affects the Royal Navy and in particular the Fleet Air Arm. There is no doubt that the planned early demise of the Harrier Force and with it our Carrier Strike Capability, leaves Fixed Wing Naval Aviation facing a very tough time until the Joint Strike Fighter becomes available. Other areas of FAA capability, notably the Commando Helicopter Force, also face a very uncertain future. There are still debates to be held, so the final outcome for the FAA remains unclear as I write.*

*With that in mind, it is now even more important than at any other time that we continue to support the living memorial, for all those that have gone before and are currently serving, which is kept enshrined in the Fly Navy Heritage Trust and especially the Royal Navy Historic Flight."*

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### **FNHT's Brand New Website gets airborne!**



For those of you with access to the internet, we are pleased to announce that our new website is due to go live in November this year in time to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Operation Judgement the attack on Taranto, one of the seminal moments in British naval aviation history. Whilst our previous website was attached to the RN Historic Flight's website, the Trust's management have recognised the need for our own website to be independent. Our sincere thanks go to Lee Howard, the Historic Flight's photographer and webmaster who had designed and kept our old website up-to-date for several years.

The new website has a completely different look which has been designed to encourage more visits and most importantly encourage more people to sign up and donate to the Trust. The site enables online donations and joining as well as information about upcoming events and online signup. News items about current activities as well as archived newsletters and reports will also be available. Details of our history, raison-d'être, how you can help, how we spend your money and the future are all there as well as how to contact us and who are our Trustees and Staff.

**Don't delay – visit the new website at [www.fnht.co.uk](http://www.fnht.co.uk) right away!**

## The Royal Navy Historic Flight update by Mike Abbey

It is now more than 67 years since Fairey Swordfish LS326 first flew and bearing in mind she was built during WWII, with a very short life expectancy, it is a testament to the RNHF and our supporters that the aircraft is now flying again. On the 30<sup>th</sup> September after a very protracted, frustrating but thorough “regeneration” package LS326 took to the skies for a 15 minute shakedown flight after completing a set of exhaustive ground runs. LS326 last flew in July 2008 and the intervening period should be considered as a pause in the continuing life of this famous aircraft. Frustrating it has been, but emotions have to be tempered with the knowledge that the aircraft will last for another 100 years and remain as a living memorial to all those who have served in the Naval Air Service and Fleet Air Arm.



The first flight in LS326 on the 30<sup>th</sup> September was memorable and daunting for me especially as the last time I had landed this aircraft it was without an engine. Trepidation soon turned to jubilation as I opened the throttle on the end of runway 27 at Yeovilton and the old girl accelerated down the runway without missing a beat. 55 knots and she gently lifted off the runway; I barely had time to note the boost pressure but was conscious that there was a lot more power available. Once past 800 feet I could relax a tad, comfortable in the thought that if anything happened to the engine I could probably make a good fist of getting back to the airfield in one piece. No need to worry, the aircraft soared up to 3000 feet in the Yeovilton overhead. Under strict instructions from the engineers to keep it airborne for only 15 minutes I was reluctantly on my way down again shortly afterwards. Flying the Swordfish is



relatively straight forward once you have allowed for all the ergonomic challenges in the cockpit. The controls are very responsive for such a large biplane and handling-wise she has very few vices. Once the throttle is closed she takes on the flying characteristics of a brick and this was a timely reminder of my last sortie in LS326. Slotting into the circuit was no drama with all the resident aircraft obligingly getting out of my way. Age before beauty and all that! One major challenge of flying the Swordfish, or any other open cockpit aircraft for that matter, now comes into play. With power on and your head out of the cockpit radios are a bit superfluous as you can't hear anything. By lowering the seat to its lowest run, sticking your head inside the cockpit and throttling back communications are possible, but timing and swift hands are essential. Then of course the other ergonomic pooh trap comes into play, in that you must remember to raise the seat before attempting a landing. Fortunately I remembered and the landing was surprisingly uneventful. With a nice 5 knot breeze running straight down the runway she kissed the ground and rolled to a gentle stop on the runway. One of those landings you hope everyone is watching, but know nobody will have seen. Once back safely at the flight the engineers gave the aircraft a thorough going over and found everything in order. So far so good, the aircraft has subsequently completed an annual check test flight and post engine test flight with only minor snags found. Reluctantly I am now passing the baton onto the next generation of Swordfish pilots, Glenn Allison and Simon Wilson. Glenn has successfully converted onto the Fish and has already got 7 hours under his belt taking the aircraft to Duxford for their autumn show, plus a number of memorial flypasts in the

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local area. Simon will start his conversion in the spring of 2011 in time for both pilots to hit the display circuit next year.

As winter approaches the flight engineers are preparing themselves for a relentless period of activity. The Seahawk will undergo a major engine survey after 3 years of non-stop displays. It is hoped that the work can be completed over the winter to allow her to continue displaying during the 2011 season. We anticipate the Centaurus engine for Sea Fury VR930 to be returned to the UK from America at the beginning of next year. The engine will then be fitted with data monitoring equipment before being reinstalled into the aircraft. With a fair wind and no unexpected problems we are hopeful that VR930 will be flying again in 2011.



In my next report I hope to be able to fill you in on Sea Fury T20 VX281 (G-RNHF), which is currently undergoing test flights at North Weald by Kennet Aviation. Once the aircraft has a CAA permit to fly it is hoped to bring it to Yeovilton to supplement the current collection of aircraft.

The next major challenge on the horizon is the completion of the Swordfish W5856 "regeneration" project, where we aim to match up the newly restored BAE Systems wings with a Pegasus engine at the end of next year. The medium to long term plan being to have 2 Swordfish available for the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the "Battle of the Atlantic" in 2013.



### **A round-up of FNHT activity since May 2010.**

#### **Swordfish Golf Tournament Monday 7 June – Bowood Wiltshire**

Once again AgustaWestland kindly sponsored this annual competition which was particularly well supported this year by many of our main corporate teams plus some new teams from Loders Motor Group, Wadworth and Harmonic. In all 19 four-ball teams battled it out on a fine day in June and Thales emerged the victors for the second year running. The teams were also treated to



a spirited fly-past by the Historic Flight Seahawk, skilfully flown by Lt Ian Sloan RN. Nick Whitney, the Senior Vice President from AgustaWestland kindly presented the prizes which also included a brand new set of Golf Clubs generously donated by the TaylorMade and won on a table raffle which raised over £1300 alone. Thank you to all the teams who played on the day which realised a profit of over £10,000 for the Trust.



#### **'Spirit of Swordfish at the Rose and Crown Trent' – Friday 18 June**



Wadworth Brewery and the Rose and Crown at Trent laid on an enjoyable afternoon and early evening which saw flying displays, the Fly Navy Balloon and the FNHT Merchandise Trailer all contributing to a very successful fundraising event based around a local launch of the successful Swordfish Ale. This was very much a local event and was well supported by our staff, Trustees and the local community. Two lucky people from the village won



a raffle for a ride in the Balloon that same evening and overall the event raised over £300 for the Trust.

### Yeovilton International Air Day Saturday 10 July.



Thanks to the many volunteers who offered to help out in the FNHT Marquee and around the Air Day, this is becoming a focal point for our supporters and a place to enjoy the displays and talk to other enthusiasts. Once again we are indebted to Jeremy Cozens, who lends us his marquee and supervises our willing band of volunteers in putting it up and taking it



down. Several other volunteers (why are they all called Sue?) then looked after our guests on the day in helping with refreshments (including the most welcome Swordfish Ale) and lunches generously donated by Boots plc. Lockheed Martin kindly sent six of their Trainee Undergraduates who like Alan Sugar's Apprentices each tried to sell the most FNHT Raffle Tickets – they are now all 'Hired' and raised over £500 alone!

### Charity Flying Day at Yeovilton, Saturday 18 September

Many of you will be aware that we had to cancel this event for this year. By the middle of July only 15 had signed up to attend (compared to over twice the number at the same time in 2009). In addition, the MoD informed us that the Defence Estates Licence we are required to obtain to use the Air Station would probably attract a fee of £1000 (a sum hitherto waived for us). Reluctantly, we therefore cancelled the day before we incurred any charges for other requirements like First Aid Cover and hire of toilets. This was a huge shame as this event has generated over £10,000 in previous years.



For those who had already signed up, we returned their monies but offered a mini open day at the Historic Flight as compensation. Members of the Yeovilton Flying Club generously gave up a Saturday in September and after a fascinating tour of the Flight hosted by the CO, followed by a buffet lunch, our guests were given the opportunity to fly in several private aircraft.

This proved a very enjoyable day for not only our guests, but also the FNHT and RNHF staff. And with some generous donations on the day, we raised several hundred pounds.

***Such was the success of this much smaller event that we have decided to run several more next year along the same lines. Please look out on our website or keep in contact with the office for more details. The first one will take place in spring next year and will be first-come, first-served for limited numbers. Details will be posted on the website and in the aviation press.***

### FNHT Grand Raffle

A huge thank you to all our supporters and volunteers who have been busy selling raffle tickets all year.



Through your hard work we raised almost £7000 profit for this event. The Draw took place at the Historic Flight on 30 September and the winning tickets were pulled out by Brian Keene, the Managing Director of Lodgers Motor Group, who had generously donated the First Prize of a Hyundai Supermini. Captain Dickie Payne RN, a Lynx and Harrier pilot currently



serving at High Wycombe was the lucky winner and is seen here being presented with the car by Mike

Staunton, Hyundai's National Sales Manager. A list of the other prize winners is on our website at [www.fnht.co.uk](http://www.fnht.co.uk)

**Did you know that 34 of our Supporters have already raised almost £200 by using Easyfundraising when shopping online?**

Since last year when we advertised that you can raise extra money for the Trust at **no additional cost to yourself** by using [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) you are bringing in much needed funds on a regular basis. You can now do all your online shopping via this method and if you use **Ebay – they donate a whopping 15%** of the purchase price to FNHT! Please, please continue to use this avenue of purchasing and tell all your friends and relations to sign up to easyfundraising and nominate the FNHT as their chosen Charity. We can tell from our easyfundraising account that 34 of you have already signed up – thank you very much; **but what about the other 427 supporters who receive the newsletter by email and can use the internet for shopping?** Details on how to sign up are as follows:

**easyfundraising**  
.org.uk

All the major on-line outlets, Ebay, Amazon, Currys, M & S, Tesco, John Lewis, Boots, Argos etc etc have pledged to donate a percentage of all money you spend through their websites to a charity/cause that you nominate. All you have to do is register as a user at [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and then find 'Fly Navy Heritage Trust' as your cause. You then go straight to whichever on-line store you wish and make your purchase. We then receive a quarterly cheque for the full amount that has been donated by the companies you have used. It's as simple as that.....**please use easyfundraising whenever you purchase anything on-line and save the link in your favourites**; the money you help raise goes directly to keep the Historic Aircraft in the air. Please tell all your friends and relations to use this fundraising site as well!

#### **FNHT Supporters' Group Membership Card - 2011**

If you have received your Newsletter by post then you should have found enclosed your FNHT Supporters' Group membership card valid throughout 2011. For those that are receiving your Newsletter by email, then we will send you your Membership Card separately. Don't forget that your card gives you reduced price entry into the Fleet Air Arm Museum as many times as you wish during the year. The card will also give you free access into our Supporters' Marquee at Yeovilton's International Air Day on Saturday 9 July. In addition, we are delighted to arrange personal visits to the Historic Flight if you are in the area.

#### **Upcoming Events in 2011**

##### **Ambassadors Dinner in HMS Victory**

The Second Sea Lord (Vice Admiral Charles Montgomery CBE ADC) has very kindly offered to host a Dinner on our behalf in the Great Cabin on board HMS Victory next year. The Trustees have decided to use this occasion to invite our 'Ambassadors', a group of celebrity and influential individuals who have expressed a keen interest in supporting the Trust and the Flight. This will be an opportunity for our Trustees to fully explain the vision and way forward for the Trust and show how we need the Ambassadors support and connections in order to generate the serious amounts of funding that we are seeking over the coming years. This is entirely in line with Cdre Bill Covington's Vision as explained in our newsletter this time last year. The outcome of this Dinner will be a Reception to



be held at the Fleet Air Arm Museum in June next year where our Ambassadors hope to raise a significant sum (several million pounds) for the Trust.

## Sea Fury Dinner – HQS Wellington Wed 2 March 2011



This is our annual Charity Auction Dinner to be again held in London. We have moved venues for 2011 and will be dining in the splendour of HQS Wellington moored alongside the Embankment in the heart of London. This year our theme is remembering the FAA participation in the Korean War between 1950 and 1953. We are offering tables of 8 at £1400 per table, or smaller numbers at £175 per seat. As usual we anticipate an eclectic mixture of guests including Senior Naval Officers, Veterans from the Campaign and leading



personalities from the Defence Industries and the City. The evening will be a reception on the Quarterdeck followed by a four course meal in the Wellington's Court Room. The evening will finish with a Charity auction where unique lots will be on offer under the careful hammer of one of London's leading Auction Houses. You can sign up for this Dinner by visiting the website or contacting the office on the number above, or completing the form at the back of the newsletter.

## Swordfish Golf Tournament – Bowood Hotel, Spa and Golf Resort, Mon 6 June 2011

This extremely popular and well supported event will once again take place at Bowood in Wiltshire. Details of how to sponsor a team or come and play yourself can be found on our website or by contacting Nick in the office on 01935 842005.



Details of other events for 2011 will be posted on the website and in our next Newsletter due in May next year.

**Finally, from all the Trustees and Staff of the Fly Navy Heritage Trust, we wish you all a very Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year**

### FNHT Personalities.

RAdm Terry Loughran – Chairman of Trustees

Cdre Bill Covington – Executive Trustee

Mrs Sue Dible – Business and Office Manager

Cdr Sue Eagles – Marketing and Communications Manager *New member of staff*

Cdr Nick Foster – Events Manager

Mr Bill Burgess – Company Secretary

**If you have received the newsletter by post it means we don't have an email address for you. If you would prefer an e-copy (which saves us money) – please let the office know.**

## FULL LIST OF FNHT EVENTS FOR 2011

Further details are available on our website at [www.fnht.co.uk](http://www.fnht.co.uk) or contact the office on 01935 842005.

- Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February – Ambassadors Dinner onboard HMS Victory
- Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March – Charity Auction Dinner HQS Wellington, London
- A Saturday in April tbc – Open Day at RNHF (1)
- Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June - Swordfish Golf Tournament, Bowood
- Friday 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup> June ((tbc) – Ambassadors Reception at FAA Museum
- Saturday 9 July – FNHT Marquee at Yeovilton International Air Day
- A Saturday in September tbc – Open Day at RNHF (2)
- A Saturday in October tbc – Open Day at RNHF (3)
- Friday 30<sup>th</sup> September - FNHT Grand Raffle Draw





## The Sea Fury in Korea Charity Auction Dinner

*HQS Wellington, London – Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2011*

The Fly Navy Heritage Trust is pleased to announce that their Charity Auction Dinner in 2011 will honour the contribution and sacrifice made by those members of the Fleet Air Arm who served in the Korean Campaign between 1950 and 1953.

Tables may be reserved by Companies or individuals and can be hosted by a knowledgeable Naval Host and a FAA Veteran from the Korean Campaign if required. Each table of 8 seats will cost £1400 or £175 for each seat if you want to attend individually. If you would like to join us at this unique event, please complete the form below and return it to us as soon as possible to FNHT, RNAS Yeovilton, Ilchester, Somerset, BA22 8HT. **SEND NO MONEY NOW**

I would like to reserve ( ) Table(s) at the Sea Fury Dinner – 2nd March 2011

Name.....

Company.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Post Code.....

Telephone: work.....mobile.....

Email.....