



Issue 50 Jul19—Sep19

Contrails

Newsletter of the
Christchurch Aviation Society
CAvSoc

Aviation Around Poole Bay

Our May talk following the AGM was from Kevin Patience. He had become interested in historical aviation following a divers training course in the RAF and at Malta in the 60's had dived on a sunken Spitfire and Maryland recovering parts of both.

Kevin outlined the growth of aviation in the area around Poole during the early days from Samuel Cody in 1908, William McArdle who had owned a garage in Bournemouth and sold up to become Bournemouth's first aviator and who jointly ran the school at East Boldre in the New Forest and Charles Rolls who died in Bournemouth's centenary air pageant in 1910. The first Schneider trophy race following WWI was in 1919 on a triangular course from Bournemouth Pier across Poole Bay 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 the later Schneider Trophy aircraft arguably being the most prominent. Meanwhile Alan Cobham started his company Flight Refuelling in 1934. The Shorts Mercury and Maia piggy back concept for transatlantic mail showed promise. In Southampton the Shorts C Class flying boats had started a regular service and these could then be refuelled in flight to cross the Atlantic although later they found they did not need to be refuelled by using higher take off weights. 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 Salterns Marina had become the BOAC operations base and 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 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, Fleet Air Arm Walrus', Kingfishers and Fairey Sea Foxes.

Meetings Schedule

Wednesday **04Sep19**

Bomber Command by George Caple

Wednesday **06Nov19**

Working on HM Submarines by Ray Jones

Wednesday **08Jan20**

To be Notified



At the beginning of WWII a brand new ordnance factory was built at Sopers Lane, Creekmoor, immediately to the North of Holes Bay, itself on the North edge of Poole Bay. The main output of this factory was the 20mm Hispano-Suiza cannon used in Spitfires and Hurricanes.

Aircraft casualties were inevitable in the Poole Bay area such as 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 Halifax at Kingston Lacey and a He111 whose crew were buried initially in a local cemetery.

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.

Bournemouth Air Festival

There were some new shapes in the sky with the Saab Draken, Lockheed Shooting Star, P47 Thunderbolt, P51 Mustang and a new aircraft for the RAF the P8 Poseidon maritime arctf based on the Boeing 737-800.

