



Editorial

Mick Davis

I'll start with few bits of feedback from recent Committee activity. As announced last year, Graham Chisnall will be standing down as Chairman. Originally, Graham had intended to do so from the end of this

year but will continue in the role until after the 2024 Annual General Meeting, in order to see through several projects which are currently ongoing. One of those is the introduction of our new publishing venture, *Contact!*. This is intended to appeal to those new to our area of interest, with the content being shorter, more general articles. It will be an online publication and, as such, can feature plenty of colour, printing costs precluding that in the CCI journal. It is envisaged that Joe Moran's modelling column will move across to *Contact*. The first issue has been prepared by Derek, Nicole and Andy – and it looks really good. It will be launched in 2024.

I featured Daniel Arbon's new Hawker film in the last editorial, and it has, finally, become available for release. At the instigation of Bob Jones, the Great War Aviation Society was a sponsor of the project and receives due credit. The film received a favourable review in *The Times* and our President, Peter Dye, was canvassed for his views by that newspaper – all good publicity for the Society. The film will be available on Vimeo, to stream for £0.99 or to buy for £1.99.

Now for the bad news. First, I'll draw your attention to this from Brian Slater: From January 2024, our bank in the UK is discontinuing its service of collecting the proceeds of foreign currency cheques, apparently because most international transactions are now electronic. This means that, from the end of this year, we will no longer be able to accept US \$ cheques in payment for orders because we will have no means of banking them and collecting the proceeds into our bank account. We do still accept credit cards or debit cards, either with an order placed via our website or using the order form contained with your quarterly Journal. Secondly, Brian will be stepping down as Treasurer. He has been fulfilling that role for seven years and is finding it difficult to keep up with his various commitments. Brian has given notice that he will step down from the Treasurer role at the end of 2024. We therefore need a replacement. Brian has suggested that the role could be split into two, each with specific areas of responsibility. Ideally, early replacement would be beneficial, Brian would then be able to coach the new Treasurer(s) in the systems operated. Finally, the end of the year means that subscriptions for 2024 are due, if they have not been paid already. Given the cost of commercially produced magazines, CCI still represents excellent value for money.

This issue

Like most of our members, I had not heard the name Hank Wambolt until I read 'Tich' Rochford's excellent autobiography *I Chose the Sky*. The gaffe made by that Canadian pilot during a Royal inspection made me smile at the time and now we have Stewart Taylor's take on his service career. I don't recall a previous CCI article that has dealt with the activities of 1 Wing RNAS and so the article is welcome for that alone. However, it also provides extra information about the activities of 3N Squadron during its time flying Sopwith Pups.

The late Peter Wright provided CCI with a very detailed look

at the coding of reconnaissance photographs by the British air services. Now, Peter Dye has delved into German practices and produced a largely photographic study, not just of the coding but also of the cameras used and the machines that carried them. Again, this a completely new topic covered by this journal.

When it comes to the air war over Macedonia, Mike Kelsey is the leading authority. His contribution this time is the biography of C.B.S. Spackman, all of whose operational WWI career was in that theatre. The story will appear in two parts. This first, in this issue, covers his training and time with 47 Squadron. The second, which will appear in CCI 55/1, covers his service with 150 Squadron as a fighter pilot and his subsequent long post-war service in the RAF.

Another authority is Paul Hare, whose knowledge of the Royal Aircraft Factory and its products is unmatched. In this issue, Paul looks at an individual FE2b, 5206, and presents a wealth of photographic coverage of its capture.

Two tabulations were omitted from Nicolas Severs' article on the 43 Squadron aircrew of Rimmer and Lownds in the last issue (mea culpa – MD). They are presented as an insert in this issue, one which can be slipped into issue 54/3.

Next Issue

In addition to the concluding part of the Spackman story, 55/1 will see the start of a short series of articles that cover the history of the Imperial Russian Naval Air Service – again breaking new ground. It was provided via the late Harry Woodman, who edited the text and provided a wealth of extra information. Packed with rare photographs, maps and scale drawings of some of the machines used, the feature should become the standard work on the subject.

201 Squadron RAF is one of the less well-covered units, but Stewart Taylor's biography of J.M. Mackay DFC CdeG helps to redress the matter. It covers the summer 1918 period through to the Armistice and highlights the dangerous ground attack undertaken during that time. As usual, Stewart provided numerous photographs, both of men and machines, that have hitherto been unpublished.

Not 201 Sqn but its predecessor, 1N Sqn, this poor photo shows an extra, previously un-noted, tailplane marking on Camel B6398. Despite some publications stating that B6398 served at either Gosport or Turnberry, its service was all with the RNAS/RAF in France, initially with 1N Sqn (201 Sqn from 1.4.1918) and then with 209 Sqn, where its usual pilot was W.R. May. The exotic colour scheme had been overpainted by then. It was finally re-issued to 201 Sqn, being flown in successful combats by Capt R.B. Brading, and survived until wrecked in a post-Armistice accident.



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