



Monday 12 August 2013

IWM Duxford-based Catalina takes on a round-Britain challenge

Commemorating a 100 year old flight in the aircraft's own 70th birthday month

On Wednesday 21 August, Catalina G-PBYA, operated by Plane Sailing Air Displays Limited and based at IWM Duxford, undertakes a remarkable aviation challenge.

Honouring the daring flying expeditions of the pioneer aviators, the Catalina will undertake, in its centenary year, the 1913 Circuit of Britain flight, which was flown by pilot Harry Hawker and mechanic Harry Kauper, both Australians, in a Sopwith Waterplane.

The Catalina celebrates its 70th birthday this month, making it the oldest UK-based airworthy amphibian.

In 1913, the Circuit of Britain Race was the first major British competition for seaplanes. It was supported by Lord Northcliffe, the proprietor of the Daily Mail, who was a great fan of aviation races. Shell Aviation provided the lubricants for the original race and will be doing the same 100 years on.

The route in 1913, as reported by *Flight* magazine, started and finished at Southampton Water, with eight control points en route. These were the Royal Temple Yacht Club in Ramsgate, the Naval Air Station in Yarmouth, the Grand Hotel in Scarborough, the Palace Hotel in Aberdeen, the Naval Air Station in Cromarty, the Great Western Hotel in Oban, the Royal St George Yacht Club in Kingstown, Dublin and the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club in Falmouth.

While the airspace in 2013 is somewhat more restricted than 100 years ago, the crew of the Catalina intends to follow the 1913 route as closely as possible. The full route is outlined below. The crew will take off from IWM Duxford on Wednesday 21 August to complete the 1600 mile route over approximately five days. They will be flying over some key historic sites, including Kingston, where the Sopwith Factory was based; Hook in Chessington, where Harry Hawker is buried and Brooklands Aerodrome (now Brooklands Museum), where Harry Hawker learnt to fly and tested aircraft for use in the First World War. The Catalina will also orbit the Classic Boat Museum at Cowes, which has on display a 1/8 scale replica of the Bat Boat tested by Harry Hawker in 1913.

The Catalina crew aspires to succeed where Harry Hawker and Harry Kauper did not.

Harry Hawker was the Chief Test Pilot for the Sopwith Aviation Company, while Harry Kauper was an experienced mechanic and Foreman of Works at Sopwith.

Although four aeroplanes were originally entered for this aerial challenge in 1913, of their competitors, Samuel Cody was killed in a flying accident on 7 August, while F K McLean withdrew his Short S.68 aircraft due to engine trouble. The Radley-England Waterplane was withdrawn for the same reason. Only the two Harrys took off on the day of the race.

Their first attempt ended at Yarmouth with a cracked cylinder head and pilot exhaustion. They started

again on 25 August and managed to fly to just north of Dublin, but crashed in the sea when Harry Hawker's foot slipped off the rudder while landing. The aircraft was destroyed and Harry Kauper broke his arm. Harry Hawker got a soaking, but was otherwise unharmed. While the Daily Mail prize money of £5,000 could not be given, a consolation award of £1,000 was donated. Shell commissioned Mappin & Webb to make a model of the Sopwith Waterplane, which was presented to Harry Hawker.

The 2013 Catalina commemoration is led by pilot Jeff Boyling, who, like Harry Hawker, was born in Australia and shares a passion for aeronautical adventure. By marking this occasion, Jeff hopes to inspire younger generations with the wonder of flying and to keep the golden era of aviation alive today. Jeff said: *"Flying the Catalina G-PBYA is a huge privilege and honour. It is wonderful that this historic aircraft can pay tribute to a great aviator who was a real pioneer. May the memory of Hawker live on."*

Why not come down to IWM Duxford and see Jeff and the Catalina team depart in grand style as they take off for this challenging aerial expedition on Wednesday 21 August?

We'll be tracking the Catalina's progress on the Imperial War Museum Duxford facebook page and also via our twitter feed at https://twitter.com/I_W_M

– Ends –

For further press information please contact:

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Notes to Editors

- Project Hawker 2013 is grateful for the support of Shell Aviation.
- Find out more about the project at www.projecthawker2013.com

The Catalina centenary flight plan

All timings are local and may be subject to change. Flying is subject to weather and serviceability.

Wednesday 21 August

10.30am	Depart IWM Duxford
10.50am	Arrive at Tower Bridge, London
10.55am	Arrive at Kingston – this is where the Sopwith Factory was based
10.56am	Fly over Hook in Chessington – Harry Hawker's resting place
11am	Fly over Brooklands Museum – Harry Hawker learnt to fly here and tested aircraft for use in the First World War
11.20am	Arrive at Southampton Airport
1pm	Depart Southampton Airport and overfly the Solent Sky Museum
1.03pm	Orbit opposite Netley Abbey – the start point of the 1913 race.
1.05pm	Overfly Calshot
1.07pm	Orbit the Classic Boat Museum at Cowes – there is a 1/8 scale replica of the Bat Boat (the forerunner of the Sopwith Waterplane) tested by Harry Hawker, on display at this museum
1.23pm	Orbit the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund Sea Cottages at Rustington and then take the coastal route to Ramsgate
2.10pm	Display at Ramsgate and then take the coastal route north
3.07pm	Display at Gorleston-on-Sea and then continue on the route north
4.28pm	Display at Scarborough and then take the coastal route to Whitby
5.03pm	Arrive at RAF Leeming for overnight stay.

Thursday 22 August

10.30am	Depart RAF Leeming
10.48am	Return to Whitby and then take the coastal route north
11.05am	Orbit Seaham, where Harry Hawker put down for repairs on his 1913 flight
11.28am	Orbit Beadnell, where Harry Hawker put down on his 1913 flight
12.02pm	Overfly RAF Leuchars
12.16pm	Orbit Montrose Air Station Heritage Centre. Harry Hawker put down at Montrose on his 1913 flight.
12.25pm	Continue on the coastal route to Stonehaven
12.31pm	Display at Aberdeen and flypast of Aberdeen Airport
1pm	Arrive at Peterhead
1.10pm	Arrive at Fraserburgh
1.20pm	Arrive at Banff, a former Coastal Command base
1.32pm	Arrive at RAF Lossiemouth and then continue west to Cromarty Firth
1.45pm	Display at Cromarty
2pm	Return to Invergordon
2.05pm	Overfly Dingwall
2.14pm	Overfly Dores to proceed down the Great Glen
2.24pm	Overfly Glendoe
2.36pm	Overfly Fort William
2.50pm	Arrive at Oban, where the Catalina will overfly the Highland Games prior to its closing
3pm	Arrive at Oban

Friday 23 August

Rest day at Oban with a morning display over the harbour at 10.30am. The Catalina will be open for inspection at Oban Airport in the afternoon with a short local flight in the afternoon.

Saturday 24 August

11am	Depart Oban and overfly Oban Harbour then follow the coastal route south to overfly the North Coast and Keills, where Harry Hawker set down for aircraft repairs during the 1913 flight.
11.56am	Arrive at Larne and then follow the coastal route south
12.26pm	Arrive at Kilkeel and then enter Irish airspace
12.41pm	Arrive at Skerries
12.42pm	Arrive at Loughshinny and undertake orbit for local residents
12.45pm	Arrive at Rush
12.50pm	Arrive at Baily Lighthouse
12.52pm	Display at Dun Laoghaire followed by landing at Weston airport for fuel uplift
2.06pm	Arrive at Bray Head
2.36pm	Continue south on the coastal route to Rosslare and then depart Irish airspace
3.05pm	Arrive at Dale, followed by Pembroke Dock, a Coastal Command Base
3.38pm	Arrive at Bude and then take the coastal run to Tintagel
3.44pm	Fly past Newquay to Perranporth
3.58pm	Fly over Perranporth before returning to Newquay to land
4.03pm	Land at Newquay Airport/ RAF St Mawgan to stay overnight

Sunday 25 August

1pm	Depart Newquay Airport heading south on the west coastal route
1.16pm	Arrive at Pendeen Lighthouse to fly around Land's End and take the coastal route to Falmouth

1.40pm	Display at Falmouth, between Pendennis Castle and the Penance Point.
2.20pm	Arrive at Bolt Head
2.36pm	Arrive at Exmouth
2.46pm	Arrive at Lyme Regis
2.57pm	Arrive at Portland and then take the coastal route to Swanage and Sandbanks
3pm	Arrive at Poole Harbour and the Bournemouth seafront
3.12pm	Arrive at Hengistbury Head
3.15pm	Arrive at Needles Lighthouse and then take the coastal route south to the Isle of Wight.
3.31pm	Orbit over the Classic Boat Museum at Cowes and then head to Calshot
3.37pm	Orbit opposite Netley Abbey
3.39pm	Overfly the Solent Sky Museum
3.40pm	Overfly Southampton Airport
4.01pm	Overfly Brooklands Museum – Harry Hawker learnt to fly here and tested aircraft for use in the First World War
4.04pm	Overfly Hook in Chessington – Harry Hawker's resting place
4.06pm	Overfly Kingston, where the Sopwith factory was based
4.14pm	Overfly Tower Bridge to clear north for the home run
4.34pm	Arrive back at IWM Duxford!

Harry Hawker and Harry Kauper – the original aviation pioneers

Harry Hawker

Harry Hawker was born in Moorabbin, Melbourne, Victoria on 22 January 1889. He trained as a mechanic, initially at a bicycle depot, before becoming a car mechanic. As a boy, he had been interested in the flight of birds and in aviation. In 1910, he witnessed the first controlled powered flight in Australia by Ehrich Weiss (better known as Harry Houdini, the escapologist) flying a French Voisin biplane.

Using all his savings, he left Australia in May 1911, with fellow mechanics Harry Kauper and Harry Busted, for the United Kingdom. He worked for the Commer Car Company, Mercedes Company and Austro-Daimler as a mechanic while seeking an entry into the world of aviation.

In June 1912, the Sopwith Aviation Company was formed. After meeting Fred Sigrist, Head of Works at Sopwith, Harry had secured a position with the company. A month later, he had sufficiently impressed Tommy Sopwith to begin personal tuition to learn to fly. He gained his Royal Aero Club licence on 17 September 1912. With only 24 hours flying in his logbook, Harry secured his first aviation prize, the British Empire Michelin Cup No.1 for endurance, on 24 October 1912. He remained airborne for 8 hours and 23 minutes, a significant achievement at the time.

The following year, he set British altitude records at Brooklands and took part in further aviation contests, including winning the Mortimer Singer Prize, the first contest for amphibious aircraft.

In 1913, Harry was actively involved in the design and development of the Sopwith Tabloid, the fastest and most manoeuvrable aircraft of the time. He displayed the aircraft in Australia in 1914. Another production model was fitted with floats, winning the 1914 Schneider Trophy Race, piloted by Sidney Pixton. In June 1914, Harry developed a tail spin recovery technique and looped-the-loop in a Tabloid 12 times.

When the First World War broke out in July 1914, Harry's skill as a test pilot was recognised. He tested 295 aircraft in 199 flying days prior to the aircraft being delivered to various squadrons. The 1916 Sopwith Camel, of which 5,497 were built, was largely a Harry Hawker design. It was fitted with Harry Kauper's interrupter gear to allow machine guns to fire through the propeller arc.

Harry Hawker married Muriel Peart on 14 November 1917. Throughout the remainder of the First World

War, he continued test flying many different types of Sopwith aircraft, including the Triplane, Dolphin, Dragon, Snail and Salamander.

Following the First World War, one of the big aviation challenges was crossing the Atlantic Ocean. Harry attempted this feat with his navigator, Commander Kenneth McKenzie Grieve, on 18 May 1919. The Sopwith aircraft they used was full of innovations, including a detachable landing gear and advanced safety features such as immersion suits. Unfortunately, after 1,000 miles, radiator failure forced them to ditch. After a week with no news, Britain feared for its adopted hero. But the lives of Harry and Kenneth were saved by their immersion suits and detachable life raft. They were recovered by the SS *Mary*.

Harry became the first civilian to be recognised with the Air Force Cross, which was immediately awarded to him by King George V. The Daily Mail awarded Harry with £5,000, which was half the prize money they had offered for a successful trans-Atlantic crossing.

By 1920, the Sopwith Aircraft Company was in trouble. With war contracts a thing of the past, the company was reduced to making bicycles and saucepans. It was wound-up in September 1920. On 15 November, the H G Hawker Engineering Company was started, with familiar faces including Tommy Sopwith, Fred Sigrist, Bill Eyre, F Bennett and of course, Harry himself, as key players.

Sadly, Harry's time with his new company was short-lived as he was killed on 21 July 1921, testing a French Nieuport Gosport at Hendon. He was buried at St Paul's Church in Chessington.

The Hawker name lived on, however, with the company becoming Hawker Aircraft in 1933, then the Hawker Siddeley Aircraft Group in 1935. That company merged with the British Aircraft Corporation in 1977 as British Aerospace and subsequently as BAE Systems following a merger with GEC Marconi in 1999.

In 1978, Australia Post issued a special Harry Hawker stamp and in 1989, Moorabbin Airport was renamed Moorabbin (Harry Hawker) Airport. Many aircraft have borne the Hawker name and continue to do so.

The Catalina's centenary Circuit of Britain commemorative flight seeks to remind people of Harry Hawker's significant contribution to aviation development.

Harry Kauper

Harry Kauper was born on 12 March 1888 at Hawthorne, Melbourne. Like Harry Hawker, he became an automotive mechanic, specialising in electrical systems. He too came to England to study aviation and, after working at the Sunbeam factory, joined the Sopwith Aviation Company in June 1912. Working at Brooklands, he introduced Harry Hawker to Sopwith.

Apart from accompanying Harry Hawker on the Circuit of Britain Race, he also accompanied him for the Sopwith Tabloid demonstration to the Australian public in 1914. He developed the Sopwith-Kauper interrupter gear to allow a machine gun to fire through the propeller arc. He returned to Australia in 1919 and had a successful career in radio broadcasting.

Plane Sailing Catalina G-PBYA

Since Sopwith's early attempts, there have been many seaplanes, floatplanes and amphibians built by various manufacturers over the years. One aircraft that particularly stands out is the Catalina. Designed by Consolidated and given the designation PBY, it was one of the most widely-used multi-role aircraft of the Second World War.

Over 3,300 aircraft were produced but today less than 15 are still airworthy. The only airworthy Catalina in the UK is operated by Plane Sailing Air Displays Limited. Built in 1943 by Canadian Vickers at Cartierville, Quebec, it served with the Royal Canadian Air Force from 1943 until 1961. It was then struck

off charge and continued life as a fire bomber in Canada and France. It was flown from Canada to the UK in 2004 and is now resident at IWM Duxford.

Catalina G-PBYA is 70 years old this month, August 2013. Being an amphibian, it can operate off land as well as off water. However, given the aircraft's age and the aim of her owners to keep her flying for as long as possible, only freshwater operations are now undertaken, to avoid the damage caused by salt corrosion.

IWM Duxford

IWM Duxford is Britain's best-preserved Second World War airfield, with a fascinating history that dates back to the First World War. Its story reflects the landmark achievements made in aviation history. IWM Duxford is Europe's premier aviation museum, where historic buildings intersperse with state-of-the-art exhibition halls, including AirSpace and the American Air Museum. Historic aircraft can regularly be seen taking to the skies from Duxford's wartime airfield. Through the rich displays of aircraft and the powerful stories of the men and women involved, we tell the story of the impact of aviation on the nature of war, on people's lives and on the social and economic history of the region. With one of the finest collections of tanks, military vehicles and artillery in the UK, we also show the impact of technological development on war and conflict.

Open Daily:

Summer 2013 16 March 2013 to 26 October 10am – 6pm. Last entry an hour before closing.

Winter 2013/14 27 October 2013 to 14 March 2014 10am – 4pm. Last entry an hour before closing. (Closed 24 – 26 December).

Admission*: £17.50 Adults; £14.00 Concessions (Senior, Student, Unemployed, Disabled Adult); £12.25 Disabled Senior/Student; Children (under 16) Free; Special rates for groups of ten plus.

IWM

IWM (Imperial War Museums) tells the story of people who have lived, fought and died in conflicts involving Britain and the Commonwealth since the First World War.

Our unique Collections, made up of the everyday and the exceptional, reveal stories of people, places, ideas and events. Using these, we tell vivid personal stories and create powerful physical experiences across our five museums that reflect the realities of war as both a destructive and creative force. We challenge people to look at conflict from different perspectives, enriching their understanding of the causes, course and consequences of war and its impact on people's lives.

IWM's five branches attract over 2 million visitors each year. [IWM London](#), our flagship branch, is transforming with new First World War Galleries and a new Atrium with large object displays which will open in summer 2014 to mark the Centenary of the First World War (Please note IWM London is closed until July 2013 when it will partially re-open, and in June 2014 the museum will fully reopen). Our other branches are [IWM North](#), housed in an iconic award-winning building designed by Daniel Libeskind; [IWM Duxford](#), a world-renowned aviation museum and Britain's best preserved wartime airfield; [Churchill War Rooms](#), housed in Churchill's secret headquarters below Whitehall; and the Second World War cruiser [HMS Belfast](#).

First World War Centenary

2014 - 2018 marks the centenary of the First World War, a landmark anniversary for Britain and the world. IWM will mark the centenary by leading a vibrant, four year programme of cultural activities across the country, including the opening of brand new First World War Galleries at IWM London in 2014. For more information visit www.1914.org

