



Newsletter - November 2020

Welcome to Air-Britain's November newsletter. Here at Air-Britain we are committed to keeping all our members informed. The next edition of *Aviation World* will appear on 1st December 2020, and the November issue of *Air-Britain News* is at the printers.

2020 Membership Survey

If you haven't already done so, please take a moment to complete the Air-Britain Members' Survey. You can find the electronic survey at <https://air-britain.com/web/survey2020/> - the link will be active up to 31st December 2020. Participation is anonymous unless you opt to enter your membership number in the prize draw, with the lucky winner receiving a current Air-Britain publication of their choice.

Please DO contribute - the more results we get the better understanding we will have.

Branch News

The Covid-19 situation has encouraged several of the Air-Britain branches to explore new ways of holding their monthly meetings, and several are now active on Facebook and Zoom. Full details of all our extensive Branch network and contact details can be found on our website at <https://air-britain.com/web/branches/> - you are bound to find something for everyone there.

Annual General Meeting Feedback

Our Annual General Meeting appears to have been well received, from both those attending in person and those joining in on Zoom. There were some technical glitches on the electronic side and we have learned and eradicated these. It is very likely that next year, whether we are socially distancing or not, we will offer Zoom as an alternative way of participating for those who are not in a position to join us in person.

Sue Bushell
Newsletter Editor

IMPORTANT! **LAST ORDER DATE FOR CHRISTMAS!**

The warehouse at Tonbridge will be closing for the Christmas period, so John and his helpers can have a well-earned rest.

As a consequence, you will need to get your orders TO Tonbridge by Friday 18th December. These will be despatched by Monday 21st December. Even so, these may not arrive by Christmas so we strongly advise you to get the orders in before then!

The warehouse will reopen for business on Monday 4th January 2021.

EMAIL ADDRESS CHANGES

The Air-Britain email address system is changing from Air-Britain.co.uk suffixes to Air-Britain.com. You may start receiving redirection emails from the Air-Britain Webserver Administrator advising of the change when you send an email, please rest assured that these are automatically redirected to the email address mentioned in the text of that email so you will not need to resend it yourself - just change the recipient's email address in your mail programme address section ready for next time.

Spotlight on: John Henderson

John Henderson is our Distribution Manager, leading the team and overseeing operations at the Tonbridge warehouse. At the recent AGM he was the deserving recipient of the Chairman's award as a token of the hard work that he puts in to making sure that you get the books you ordered on time and in good condition.



Chairman Malcolm Fillmore (left) presenting John with his award at the Tonbridge warehouse.

We've asked John to tell us a bit about himself and the Tonbridge operations, to give a fuller picture of activities that happen 'behind the scenes':

I have been asked to prepare a small piece just to introduce myself and help members understand the operations that we run at Tonbridge. I've been working for AB since 2012, when Mike Rice asked me to help him with the sales and distribution; Mike and I served as Governors together at our local school, so when he heard that I had time on my hands he sought to recruit me to take over.

Since then I have moved the entire operations twice in short succession, first to the temporary set up at Chiddingstone Causeway, and then to our current premises in Tonbridge, where I set about kitting it out and making it fit for purpose. I think it accurate to say that for such a small company that our facilities are excellent. It has meant that we can safely store our books and also house an

extensive range of second-hand books and magazines. Once things return to a version of normality our premises can be visited, especially to view our second-hand stock, by prior appointment.

So how do we run the operations? In normal times the team would assemble on a Monday, and process both online and orders via post for despatch (in the UK) either as a small parcel under 2kg or a large letter with Royal Mail; or via ParcelForce as a tracked parcel for larger heavier orders over 2kg, don't forget, all our new books are post free within the UK. There's an anomaly with the orders for the Channel Islands: if we can send it via Royal Mail it can go post free, but if it is parcel then it requires customs declarations and commercial invoices: we currently impose a £5.00 surcharge as we cannot get it sent via the same terms as mainland parcels.

Overseas deliveries are very challenging for us and even within Europe it varies so much – and will do so even more after 1st January 2021 when we will need to add customs declarations forms! As we charge the additional costs to customers for all overseas deliveries we seek the most cost effective method. This is very time consuming but our team are committed to providing the best service and is the reason that you do not see the overseas P&P charges when placing your order. We can send via a courier service as cheaply as normal post to some countries, but for other destinations it is cheaper to use the postal system. We even split some orders into smaller packages and send these individually to save money to certain destinations! (Postal charges have risen for the last three years above the rate of inflation and continue to do so, with places such as the US and Canada becoming unbelievably expensive. Rates are subject to change as they can be imposed on us at short notice, and major changes to North America were implemented in July 2020.)

During lockdown periods I have been running the operations almost single handed, with help on one day a week from Mark as the rest of the 'team' have needed to go into isolation. This is challenging and not helped by things that are so avoidable and the expectations of some have been unreasonable.

So to help me to make things run smoothly we would ask the following of you:

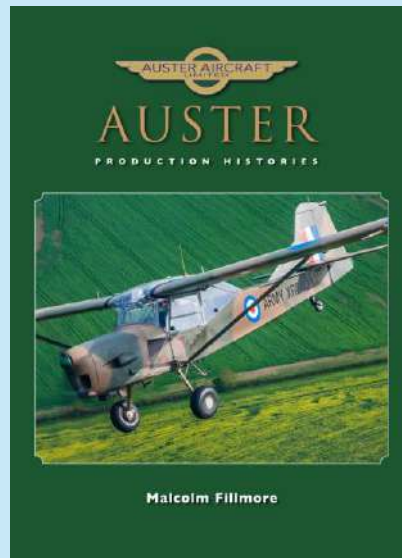
- Please ensure that all orders contain your VALID e-mail address and a telephone number. These are used only to contact you in relation to your order if there is an issue and by the courier to aid delivery.
- Ensure that the address you have stated for delivery is correct – customers have complained about non-delivery, only to find they have not entered the address correctly.
- Preferably place all orders online via our website to ensure that you can only order items we have in stock and that payment details are transmitted via a secure system.
- If you absolutely must order by post please do so using a credit/debit card as payment method. We no longer wish to receive cheques, both for health reasons and because of issues around the costs and logistics of banking them.
- When completing card payment details take the time to enter these correctly. You would be surprised at how many people have done this incorrectly (hence that contact e-mail/Tel No are essential).
- We cannot take orders over the telephone – we simply do not have the time and must concentrate on packing and getting orders out. Please do not leave details for your orders on the answerphone.

If you do leave a message on our answerphone please speak slowly, clearly and

leave a name and telephone number – some people seem to think it is a speed contest when leaving a message and then complain when they don't get a response – we need to be able to decipher what has been said. Another issue includes trying to pre-order books. You will not receive them any quicker and it just causes extra workload, as customers start complaining that they have sent in their 'order' weeks ago, causing inquiries to be made only to find we don't yet have that book in stock. This all takes time away from sending out orders and causes delays for everyone. As soon as we have a book in stock it will go live on our website and we start sending those online orders out first.

In the current climate delivery times by the shippers are sporadic to say the least; within the UK larger parcels are running within normal timescales, but large letters and small parcels are taking up to 10 working days! For European deliveries it is anything up to one month; and it can take up to 8 weeks to get a book to the US. But most importantly if you have ordered your books and are expecting them please keep an eye out for the delivery or make arrangements for safe receipt – we have had customers who place an order for a large quantity of books, only then to go on holiday! As with all failed deliveries the books eventually get returned to us – at additional cost. This then puts up costs for all. When ordering online we send out an automated e-mail upon receipt of your order AND upon despatch of the books to give you advance warning – this is another reason to use the online ordering. However, do check your 'spam' mail box for the messages if you don't think you have received them. If you do have an issue please e-mail us via the contact us button on the sales website and allow a few days for a response.

AVAILABLE NOW!



AUSTER – Production Histories

by Malcolm Fillmore

Detailing the histories of every Auster built, Auster - Production Histories is the companion volume to Auster - The Company and the Aircraft published in 2018 which told the story of Auster and the many derivatives produced over twenty-plus years.

Auster – Production Histories documents what is known about every Auster still active, currently 'resting' or long since scrapped. Perhaps one of the consequences of doing so may be to incentivise those with an engineering bias to get more back into the air. Anyone reading this who has an interest in the type might also like to join The International Auster Club with its very active website, magazine and events.

This book is the only source, published or digital, which provides the detailed histories of every Auster built. There are some 550 photos, the vast majority of which have never before been published. Air-Britain is committed to continue to record detailed aircraft histories and we therefore welcome any future additions.

Prices: Members £29.50 Non-members £39.95 – *just click on the image above to be connected to the sales website.*

COMING SOON!



BRISTOL FIGHTER

by Ray Sturtivant, Gordon Page, James J. Halley and Philip Jarrett

This 480-page, 1000-illustration hardback is at the printer's now.

Watch our website for details on publication date and pricing.

Watch out for announcements about new books on our website, Facebook page and the Air-Britain Message Board - <http://air-britain.freeforums.net/> - BEFORE placing your order.

Please DO NOT ring the Sales Department with queries. Instead, where possible please contact them by email on sales@air-britain.com and they will reply as soon as they are able to.

IMPORTANT!

As a result of the current coronavirus restrictions and to protect our staff, at present no visitors are allowed onto the warehouse premises in Tonbridge.

These restrictions will apply for the foreseeable future. We are also experiencing long delays in the processing of secondhand orders and are at present not able to satisfy overseas orders.

THE AIR-BRITAIN SECOND-HAND SALES LIST

While we are still affected by the care we have to take over COVID-19, the second-hand sales department is now back up and running. New lists are being produced monthly and the November ones are available on the Message Board and the website. So get in early! There is a new email address to use to place orders and make enquiries:

<mailto:m.fillmore@athertonbailey.com>

The lists are available on the website at:

<https://air-britain.com/web/books-2nd/>

and Message Board at

<https://air-britain.freeforums.net/board/67/second-hand-books-magazines>
to peruse at your leisure. We have added 1,200 additional titles since March!

For the run-up to Christmas we have two **SPECIAL OFFERS** for you!

These are on a first-come, first-served basis so get in now!

We have accumulated a considerable number of **Bureau Veritas registers** in the second-hand sales. These are valuable tools in researching UK and European registers (and a few others), giving far greater detail than published elsewhere. For the run-up to Christmas only, we are offering 'two for one' where you can buy two annual registers for £15.00 instead of £30.00 or a register and the equally important annual supplements (in official binder) for £12.50 instead of £25.00. All prices are plus postage so do take the opportunity of buying other items on the sales lists (we combine shipping costs). We have a considerable number of other official registers available - both UK and overseas.

We are also offering, for the same limited time period, we are also offering 25% off all copies of **Jane's All the World's Aircraft**.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We are still looking for volunteers to help sell our books and magazines on eBay. Desirably, you should live within striking distance of our warehouse in Tonbridge and have some experience in buying or selling on eBay. We are prepared to offer you a 25% share in the net proceeds realised - so it could be a remunerative outcome both for you and Air-Britain. For further details, contact secondhandsales@air-britain.com.

Air-Britain News and its electronic sister eABN



The November edition of *Air-Britain News* is at the printers. But did you know that we also publish an electronic version, which is released on the same day that the paper version is despatched to the printers? This means you can read it up to 2 weeks earlier than the posted copy, save postal costs and all the illustrations are in colour. A

subscription costs **£35.99** per annum, and single copies are **£3.99**.

Back issues (from January 2010 onward) are also available.

For more details go to <https://pocketmags.com/air-britain-magazine#>

If you have an eABN only subscription (i.e. not printed), then you can activate your Air-Britain membership by going to:

<https://www.air-britain.co.uk/actmembers/acatalog/AddOn.html>

This newsletter is just one element of Air-Britain's presence on the web. Most can be accessed from our [Main Website](#) which includes links to

- our secure [Sales site](#), where Air-Britain publications can be ordered
- [ABPic](#) - Air-Britain's online photo gallery with well over 600,000 images. Open to members and non-members, all images are screened prior to acceptance. A great way of showing and sharing your images. You, the photographer, retain all ownership rights. Members are frequently asked to share their images with others.
- The [Air-Britain Message Board](#) where members can share on a range of subjects and where we will announce new publications and other news of the organisation, often in advance of the printed magazines. We are adding production lists to our Message Board offerings: they can be found under Aviation History > Aircraft > Sub-Boards. A guide on how to register can be found [HERE](#)

In addition we have

- [AB-IX](#) - Open to members only, AB-IX is run as part of groups.io. An online discussion forum for aviation research topics only. Members can set their own message preferences (single messages, daily digest or read on the web) within groups.io. For more details contact the group owner
- The [Air-Britain Facebook](#) page - this is where we share details of Air-Britain happenings, as well as other selected items related to aviation.

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