

THE HELICOPTER ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL DINNER

Over 200 Members and Guests assembled for the Seventh Annual Dinner of The Helicopter Association of Great Britain, which was held in the Ballroom of The Dorchester Hotel, London, W 1, on Friday, September 11th, 1953

Earlier and commencing a most successful evening Commandant H Boris, M B E , gave a paper on " Problems associated with small helicopters," which was followed by an interesting discussion This is reported earlier in this Journal

Among the distinguished company present were

Sir William Farren, C B , M B E , M A , F R S , F R A E S
(President, The Royal Aeronautical Society) ,

Dr A M Ballantyne, T D , Ph D , A F R A e S
(Secretary, The Royal Aeronautical Society) ,

Major General G S Thompson, D S O , M B E
(Director of Land Air Warfare, The War Office) ,

Air Vice-Marshal T N McEvoy, C B , C B E
(The Air Ministry) ,

Rear Admiral Caspar John, C B
(Ministry of Supply) ,

Colonel R L Preston, C B E
(Secretary-General, The Royal Aero Club) ,

Commandant H Boris, M B E
(Helicop-Air, Paris) ,
(*Guests of the Association*)

Air Vice-Marshal G W Tuttle, C B , O B E , D F C
(*Guest of Charman of the Association*)

The President, in rising to give the Toast of " The Guests," referred to the great pleasure given to the Association's Members in seeing and welcoming so many Guests from home and abroad The Association was regularly checking whether there continued to be a task for such a specialised body to discharge—certainly, after looking round the gathering and after this memorable S B A C Farnborough Week and just before the Anglo-American Technical Conference, at which two out of the twelve Papers were on helicopters, there could be no doubts

The Association's task was particularly to provide an environment for informed discussion on which public opinion could be formed upon the helicopter

The Services were undoubtedly now fully convinced of the great part the Helicopter was to play in their activities For civilian uses the need now was to prepare in advance for the Helicopter, particularly in preparing landing sites , also it was necessary that the Public be educated not to expect spectacular and immediate results but to recognise the essentially long term development problem Mr Mensforth considered that this was most important, bearing in mind the many claims that were likely on research and development resources and funds, and will expeditiously be dealt with through step-by-step evolution on the foundations of consolidated experience For example, in civil transport, operating experience



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should undoubtedly be acquired now with six to eight passenger seats while waiting for fourteen to twenty passenger aircraft and certainly with the latter before demanding the very much larger machines

The year had been one of solid Helicopter progress Helicopters had been sent into many fields—in the Dutch Rescues, in Malaya, in Korea, in Greece, when the Atom Bombs had been exploded in Australia, in all these cases shewing the specialist application of the Helicopter in non-destructive roles and particularly in emergencies Public Authorities should have this in mind and determine to have Helicopters available, as they must be, in advance of any sudden requirement, then intermediately they would find many useful applications—ambulance work, sea rescue, police, etc It should be borne in mind that in the Dutch Flood Rescues, in which so many British Helicopters participated with Pilots drawn from all the Services, Operating Companies and Industry, even if the total cost of all the Helicopters taking part had been divided by the number of lives saved the cost was less than £500 per life saved

In the manufacturing industry the year had been an interesting one, Fairey had received a prototype order for a large civil compound Helicopter, Bristol had produced the "Sycamore" Mark IV, and the 173 looked encouraging at Farnborough as did the Saunders-Roe "Skeeter", Westland's production and deliveries had built up impressively and S 51's and S 55's are being used in many fields

The presence of leading men from each of the Services as Guests was most encouraging and that of the Secretary-General of the Royal Aero Club who had been, as usual so co-operative, was very welcome, as were the Representatives of the Technical Press from whom, again, much was expected in the coming year in giving proper publicity to Helicopter subjects The many United States and foreign visitors, amongst whom were some who were setting up or had set up Helicopter Clubs and Associations with whom we would look to regular co-operation, were welcomed Particularly we welcomed having Commandant Boris, who had just given a most stimulating Paper The many guests from the Industry were assured how much the Association had appreciated the support that had been given during the year

Finally, reference was made to the great help and encouragement received from the Royal Aeronautical Society, whose Secretary was present, and with the name of whose distinguished President, Sir William Farren, the Guest of Honour, the Toast was coupled

After the Toast special mention was made of the Lady Guests

RESPONSE TO THE TOAST OF THE GUESTS

SIR WILLIAM FARREN (*President of the Royal Aeronautical Society*) rose to respond on behalf of the Guests

After saying how much he and his fellow guests were enjoying the evening, he went on to admire the spirit of independence of the Helicopter Association He said that such an Association could serve many very useful purposes and that he was pleased that there was such a close and most friendly relationship between the Helicopter Association and the Royal Aeronautical Society He emphasised the fact that the Association was most welcome to hold its lectures on the Society's premises and hoped that there would be other ways in which the Society could continue to give the Association assistance

Sir William referred briefly to his own interests in helicopters and told amusing stories of his closer associations—once in 1940 when he was privileged to fly a very early Sikorsky model and surprised himself by his success—and then more recently when he was helped out of an awkward situation by a helicopter He had noted, however, that his return journey on that occasion had taken twice as long as the outward flight and by simple calculations had thereby been able to compute the speed and direction of the wind!

He announced to Members that the 1954 Bleriot Memorial lecture, to be held in Paris in March, 1954, would be presented by Mr Raoul Hafner and hoped that many of the Association's members would be able to be present He ended his brief speech by again thanking the Association on behalf of all Guests for a most entertaining and interesting evening