



BNAPS News March 2012

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BNAPS Restoration Workshop – Latest News

As a result of the latest efforts to complete the refurbishment work all is now set for the work on Charlie November to progress and to get the restoration programme in full swing. As always preparation is the key and the restoration work will gain invaluable benefit from the ongoing survey of existing components and compilation of a definitive list of items that are missing.



Views of the restoration workshop after being fully fitted out with lighting and electrics and walls and floor painted.



BNAPS Trustee and Engineering and Operations team leader Bob Wilson puts the finishing touches to the new floor on 1 March 2012.

A false floor has been laid in the workshop to cover some hazards by the main entrance doors. The exercise of transferring racking and aircraft components from the Nettlestone store can now get under way. The racking obtained under the BBC Radio Solent Community Chest scheme can now be used to full effect in the main workshop. With restoration work about to get under way BNAPS has had a quantity of aircraft and general hand tools donated to the project.

Sadly it is reported that Ted Sothcott died peacefully in the Elms Residential Home, Bembridge on 15 February 2012. Ted was employed by B-N from the early days and was a well liked and respected colleague and foreman; also Ted was one of the oldest BANTER retired B-N employees organisation's members.

Ted's funeral was held on Friday 24th of February at 12 noon in the Crematorium and attended by many of his former B-N colleagues. On behalf of BNAPS, sincere condolences are offered to Ted's family and friends at this difficult time.

An appreciation of Ted's life will appear in a later issue of BNAPS News.

Profile of Islander Operators - Island Airways

As is well known 700+ BN-2 Islanders, Defenders and Trislanders remain in service World Wide. Even now it is difficult to see how they can be replaced, particularly in high intensity, third level operations serving communities in remote locations. Close to home there are the long established operators such as Aer Arann, Isles of Scilly Skybus, Loganair, Aurigny and Hebridean Air Services that all provide essential air links to offshore islands day in day out.

Island Airways, based on Beaver Island on Lake Michigan, USA, is one such operator that exemplifies the type of operation for which the BN-2 Islander is ideally suited. Currently there are four Islanders in the fleet, N95BN (c/n 95), N137MW (c/n 1370), N866JA (c/n 185) and N80KM (c/n 80), the first two Islanders being acquired in 1982. Beaver Island is the largest island in Lake Michigan and was once home to a unique American monarchy, the island is now a popular tourist and holiday destination.



Islander N95BN taking on passengers for Beaver Island



Islander Airways hangar at Charlevoix

Island Airways can trace its origins back to 1923 when the first air passenger, a doctor providing medical services, was taken to Beaver Island from mainland airfield at Charlevoix. The Beaver Island – Charlevoix air-mail route was one of the first in the USA. In 1945 the McPhillips Flying Service was established by Joe McPhillips with a Sikorsky flying boats and the family ran this business until 1975. In 1965 the Welke family purchased a farm on Beaver Island and converted some vacant farm fields into a “landing strip” and in the late 1960s the airport was a licensed facility. In 1969 the Welke family moved to the Island and started several businesses there. In 1975 Welke Aviation was established by Paul, Bill and Betty Welke with one Piper Apache.

In 1983 McPhillips Flying Services and Welke Aviation merged to form Island Airways and by 1985 had become the largest aviation operation outside the metropolitan Detroit area. Expansion of the Island Airways fleet continued with additional Islanders, mainly for the route from Charlevoix to Beaver Island. In 1989 Paul Welke purchased all the stock of the remaining partners and soon after Piper Seneca and Chieftain aircraft were purchased to serve the expanding charter services undertaken by the airline. By 2000 Island Airways had acquired a fifth Islander to create one of the largest fleets of the type in the USA and in 2002 the airline’s maintenance department became certified as an FAA Repair Station for the repair of BN-2 Islanders.

Bill Welke passed away on 7 December 2002 and the last airplane he owned, Piper Apache N4011P, was restored by his son Paul over some four years and returned to service. In 2007 Islander N866JA was completely refurbished including a conversion to single pilot IFR configuration as the first Islander in the fleet to be IFR capable. Paul Welke has been a professional pilot for over 34 years and flown some 28,000 hours and made 35,000 trips between Beaver Island and Charlevoix and transported about 300,000 people.

It is certainly the case that Island Airways’ selection of the Islander as a dependable and sturdy aircraft perfect for “island hopping” air services has been fully proven in practice.

BNAPS on the web

The following links give access to information that may be of interest:

iwcp.co.uk/news/news/flight-salute-to-island-aircraft-34589.aspx

woottonbridgeiow.org.uk/social/?cat=69

asp-gb.secure-zone.net/v2/index.jsp?id=58/112/2749&startPage=23

bnhistorians.co.uk (note that back issues of BNAPS News can now be viewed on the BNH website)

islandheartcareclub.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/tickertape/tt0701.pdf Article by Peter Ward

[bwavg.co.uk/The Islands Oldest Islander on the Move BNAPS News Release 2010 001 V2a.pdf](http://bwavg.co.uk/The_Islands_Oldest_Islander_on_the_Move_BNAPS_News_Release_2010_001_V2a.pdf)

islandairways.com/

BNAPS Talk Evening 27 March - "A Career in Aviation" given by Bob Ward

The next Britten-Norman Aircraft Preservation Society social evening will be held on Tuesday 27 March 2012 at the Propeller Inn, Bembridge Airport. Doors will be open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. The evening will feature a talk by Bob Ward, Licensed Aircraft Engineer and Flight Engineer, titled "A Career in Aviation".



Bob is seen here alongside one of the Crop Culture "Workmaster" aircraft used in the Cameroons

Bob made an early start in aviation when, as an 18 year old, he was recruited by Desmond Norman to provide engineering support to aerial crop spraying ventures in the Cameroons. After a period working with B-N on the BN-2 prototype Bob then departed for Africa. As a flight engineer on the Hercules transports operated by SAFAir and other operators in Africa, Bob gained valuable experience in aircraft engineering and operations in these remote areas and was able to take his aircraft engineer's and flight engineer's licences in Zambia.

After some time working in other parts of the World as a flight engineer with British Caledonian, Bob spent a few years living in Spain and in 1999 returned to the UK and finished the remainder of his professional career with B-N at Bembridge.

Bob was one of the original team involved in the restoration of Islander G-AVCN some 10 years ago and is now a key member of the team with the current BNAPS project after restoration work was restarted in 2010.

There will be an entry charge of £1.00 for BNAPS Supporters Club members and £2.00 for visitors to help raise funds for our B-N Islander restoration project. The evening will include a raffle and an opportunity to purchase items from the BNAPS sales stand. Tea or coffee and biscuits will be provided, all are welcome.

New book "The Last Great Adventure in British Aviation?" by Derek Kay, now available from BNAPS

BNAPS has been given the opportunity by Derek Kay to obtain copies of his book about his time running the technical publications department at B-N. If sufficient advance orders are forthcoming a batch of books will be ordered and supplied at £1 off the list price of £9.99 plus £1.50 UK p&p. Arrangements have been made with Derek to include a signed insert in each book supplied by BNAPS. If you would like obtain a copy of the book please contact Bob Wealthy on 01329 315561

BNAPS Items for Sale - Price List March 2012

1. Trislander 40th book (2nd edition) @ £3.50*
2. Islander VCN restoration book – "The Story So Far" (2nd Edition) @ £3.50*
3. Nymph and Freelance book (1st Edition) @ £5.00*
4. Britten Sheriff book (1st Edition) @ £3.50*
5. BN-1F Finibee book (2nd edition) @ £3.50*
6. Trislander lapel pins @ £2.50
7. Aviation at Bembridge book (3rd Edition planned for Spring 2012) @ £6.50
8. BNAPS "Charlie November Restoration" mug @ £6.00*
9. Postcards depicting B-N Islanders and Trislanders @ 50p each or 3 for £1.00
10. Islander 40th pens @ 50p
11. BNAPS enamelled lapel badges @ £2.00
12. BNAPS sew on patches @£1.50
13. Islander 40th key rings @ £1.00
14. Islander 40th mugs @ £2.50
15. Islander VCN A3 colour print @ £2.00
16. B-N Caps (original style logo) @ £3.50
17. BNAPS polo shirts blue or grey L, XL £15.00 each

Items marked * are available to BNAPS Supporters Club members at 50p off marked price

Above items are normally on sale at BNAPS events or place an order by e mail or by writing to the BNAPS contact address below. UK post and package will be in addition to prices shown above.

More BNAPS Supporters Club Members Needed

If any BNAPS Supporters Club member knows of anyone who would be interested in joining please pass on BNAPS contact details as given on page 4. Anyone with an interest in local aviation heritage is welcome.

As a point of clarification, whilst BNAPS has contact with B-N Group from time to time as a charitable trust BNAPS is a completely independent organisation.

Forthcoming BNAPS Events

BNAPS Social Evenings will be held at the Propeller Inn unless otherwise advised, please arrive by 19:00 for a start at 19:30. Talks will generally finish by 21:00.

Entry charge for is £1.00 for BNAPS Supporters Club members and £2.00 for visitors.

27 March 2012 BNAPS Social Evening – Talk by Bob Ward "A Career in Aviation"

22 May 2012 BNAPS Social Evening - details to be advised

Events later in 2012 are at the planning stage and will be announced in due course.

BNAPS Trust

BNAPS is a Registered Charity, No. 1100735, set up to "preserve the history and aircraft of Britten-Norman with the support of members' subscriptions, sponsorship and donations"

BNAPS registered address is:

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Trustees are Peter Graham, Bob Wilson, Guy Palmer and Bob Wealthy.

Peter Graham is chairman of the board of trustees.

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