

BNAPS News Review

Issue 4

Spring 2024



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BNAPS CHAIRMAN UPDATE

Dear BNAPS Supporters,

It is with great pleasure and some relief to announce that the book “Saving Charlie November” is now very close to being in print now that a printed and bound proof copy is available for final check. The work to get the book to this stage has proved more onerous and time consuming than originally envisaged. Thanks to the efforts of Allan Wright who compiled, edited and organised the print run, together with support from Guy Palmer and other members of the restoration team in cross checking and correcting the draft the end result is a detailed and comprehensive account of how historic B-N Islander G-AVCN was saved following its arrival back in the UK in March 2000.

Work has continued to get the “Islander Experience” flight simulator fully commissioned for regular use. Mark Porter designed a representative control set up, with help from Bryan Groves, and has also persevered with the work of getting the electronics and computing side up together with help from Clynt Perrott. Paul Brook has made up trim panels for the fuselage and doors and Bernie Coleman has helped with the installation work.

Display area lighting units and 13 Amp electrical outlets have been installed in the museum space during the winter period. An electrical supply with safety cut out provisions has been installed for the flight simulator. Additional display facilities will be incorporated over the coming months. The priority at present is to complete a clear out of materials and other items left over from the time when restoration work on G-AVCN was under way.

Our 2024 Spring Open Day took place on 20 April and attracted about 50 visitors. Thanks go to all those who helped out on the day. BNAPS also supported the Wight Military & Heritage Museum’s St Georges Day open day on 27 April.

News that Britten-Norman has been re-financed was most welcome and hopes are high that the future of the Islander is secure and new build aircraft will soon be available with airframes constructed using the jigs set up at the Bembridge works. In 2024 B-N is celebrating 70 years since the company was incorporated in 1954 and has announced its intention to hold several celebratory events. Details will be circulated when available.

Thanks go to Allan Wright for his work to produce the quarterly BNAPS News Review, now in its 4th issue, and for handling the transition from the BNAPS News era. BNAPS is keen to hear from readers if they have any comments on the content and whether there are topics that would be of interest or given more emphasis. Contributions of articles and images for inclusion in future BNAPS News Review issues will be most welcome, please contact Allan Wright, BNAPS News Review editor, by Email editor@bnaps.org.uk

Best wishes to all and thanks for your continuing support of BNAPS,

Yours sincerely,

Bob Wealthy,

Britten-Norman Aircraft Preservation Society Chairman

Cover picture: Air Tetiaroa BN-2T F-OKKB (Air Tetiaroa)





View of museum space with new lighting. (Tony Dann)

Progress Summary: January – May 2024

Museum Space

Additional area lighting units have been installed and have resulted in a considerable enhancement in the presentation of Islander G-AVCN as a museum exhibit.

Additional wall mounted 13 Amp socket outlets have also been installed together with electrical safety supply connections for the “Islander Experience” flight simulator.

Islander G-AVCN

One of the tasks has involved regular cleaning to remove a dust build up. The hydraulic brake pipes kindly donated by FIGAS have been installed on the port main undercarriage leg/axle.

Main landing gear brake pipe assembly installed on port main landing gear leg/axle.

See picture right.

An electrical system check prior to the Open Day on 20 April revealed that a bulb in the strobe light had failed. Bryan Groves found a replacement bulb in the parts store and the bulb was installed by Paul Brook.

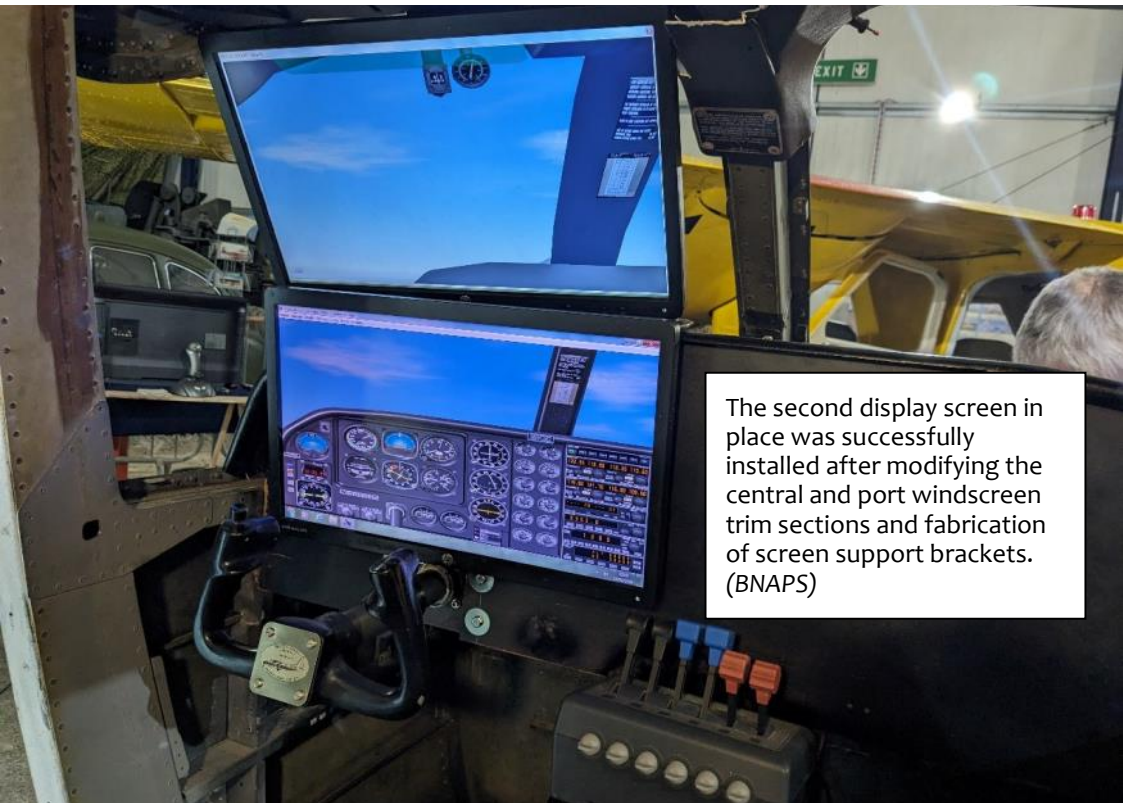


“Islander Experience” Flight Simulator.

Controls and Displays

Thanks go to Bryan Groves for taking on the work of re-engineering the control wheel assembly to improve its strength and durability. The second screen display has been installed and the software configured to suit.

Issues with distortion and break up of audio when using the original speaker units have now been resolved using speaker units donated by Mark Porter’s son and some software configuration changes engineered by Mark. Fine tuning of the software to give a response to control inputs more representative of an Islander is ongoing.



The second display screen in place was successfully installed after modifying the central and port windscreen trim sections and fabrication of screen support brackets. (BNAPS)

Commissioning

The flight sim has continued to be made available for use by Museum visitors as and when the state of progress allows. The interface and functionality of the flight sim software and the controls and displays is being “fine-tuned” progressively and good progress has been made although this is somewhat of a “learning exercise”. The flight simulator was set up for use to support BNAPS 2024 Spring Open Day on 20 April and for the Museum’s Open Day on 27 April.

Internal Trim

The windscreen surround and overhead trim parts recovered from a Trislander fuselage that were in the fire service compound at Guernsey Airport required a significant amount of trimming and have now been installed.

The sidewall trims made by Paul Brook have been installed and Paul and Guy Palmer sorted and installed the centre ceiling panel. Work is ongoing to fabricate left and right ceiling panel sections and door surround trim sections made by Paul Thomasson. Work on the door hinge assemblies being made by Bob Wilson has been on hold due to Bob's other commitments at home for the past few weeks, but has now been resumed.



View of windscreen trim area and forward section of ceiling panel with fuel selector control installed. (BNAPS)



View of centre ceiling panel after installation. (BNAPS)

Seating

An existing seat frame has been refurbished by Bernie Coleman and a new seat cushion made by a local upholsterer together with a replacement back rest cover. Detail fitting of the back rest cover is under way and the seat will be installed in due course.

Flight Simulator Ongoing Work Items

Work items planned for the coming months include:

- 1 Fabrication and installation of left and right ceiling panels;
- 2 Installation of cabin window surrounds;



Refurbished seat frame with new seat cushion and back rest cover being prepared for installation in flight simulator fuselage section. (BNAPS)

- 3 Fabrication and installation of external windscreen edging trim;
- 4 Installation of door surround plastic trim;
- 5 Completion of seat cover detail adjustment and installation of refurbished seat;
- 6 Completion door hinges and installation doors and door trim panels;
- 7 Preparation of external fuselage skin for re-painting;
- 8 Re-paint fuselage and add fuselage lining as originally seen when in service as VQ-SAC
- 8 Add nose legend "Frank Matthews" on both sides of nose. This is in recognition of the late Frank Matthews for his initiative in saving the fuselage section for refurbishment as a retirement project and for kindly donating it to BNAPS.

Also the prospects and implications of a flight simulator and support hardware upgrade to take advantage of new features and functions of more recently developed software and to upgrade the graphics processing capability are under investigation.

BNAPS 2024 Open Days 20 and 27 April

As in previous years BNAPS held an Open Day in April – the difference in 2024 was that two Open Days took place, the first on 20 April as the BNAPS Open Day and a re-run on 27 April in support of the Wight Military & Heritage Museum’s St George’s day celebration open day.

BNAPS activities were centred on Islander G-AVCN and the surrounding museum space. Visitors were able to get a close up look at G-AVCN and on the first open day Bryan Groves was there to run the electrical system for the aircraft lighting and to demonstrate flap operation.



Among the visitors taking an interest in Islander G-AVCN were three young engineers from B-N’s Southampton Design Office, left to right, Daniel Brannan, Alberto Quintana Carrill and Elliott McFarlane. (Alberto Quintana Carrill)

Visitors were able to take a close look at the Islander with members of the restoration team in attendance to answer questions and provide information about the restoration project and technical features of the Islander.

BNAPS sales stand was set up alongside the aircraft thanks to Norman Hobbs. Allan Wright handled the visitor sign in book, BNAPS supporters club inquiries and promotion of the soon to be published “Saving Charlie November” book. On the day, thanks to the efforts of Allan Wright, the printed and bound final proof copy of the book was available and attracted favourable comments and interest. A significant number of advance orders were taken on the day.

On the 20 April BNAPS was presented with a 1/48 scale model of Islander G-AVCN that Salisbury based aviation author and researcher Alan “Woody” Wood had made and has now



Philip Jewell (right) hands over the model of Islander G-AVCN to BNAPS Chairman Bob Wealthy. (Tony Dann)

kindly donated to BNAPS. The model was handed over to BNAPS Chairman Bob Wealthy by BNAPS supporter Philip Jewell on behalf of Alan Wood who could not be there on the day. A Perspex display case has been acquired for the model and it will soon go on show.

For the 2024 open days more of the space around the Islander was accessible to visitors. The large work table had been pressed into service to accommodate a display of framed prints and a selection of B-N aircraft models. Maury Dyer was on hand to demonstrate the flying controls of the radio controlled Islander model while alongside the restoration project a video produced by Clynt Perrott was on show.

Mark Porter, Bernie Coleman and Guy Palmer manned the “Islander Experience” flight simulator which, as always, attracted much interest and were kept busy most of the day.

Both Open Days went well with a good selection of visitors. Thanks go to all those who helped out and to the Wight Military & Heritage Museum trustees and museum manager, Steve Taylor, for all the help and support given to BNAPS.

News in-brief

We are saddened to hear of the passing of former B-N Production Director, **David Fear**, in May, at the age of 85. Picture on the right is from B-N’s *Approach* magazine in 1989.

The **BANTER*** group met for one of their regular lunches at The Propeller Inn, Bembridge on 17th May - there was a turn out of 41 people - a record number!

* B.A.N.T.E.R. stands for “Britten And Norman Testosteroned Evergreen Retirees” [clearly having moved on from original principles, and now accepting female members!]





FLY TO MARLON BRANDO'S RESORT - IN A BN-2T

Marlon Brando (right), a well known movie actor who won Oscars for *On the Waterfront* (1954) and *The Godfather* (1971), was widely celebrated recently on the 100th anniversary of his birth - 3rd April 1924. He is remembered as a great film actor, and for his erratic career, disdain for Hollywood, and eccentric choices in his art and life.

One of his choices was his love affair with French Polynesia. He became enamoured with the islands while filming *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1962) and proceeded to buy a 12-island atoll called Tetiaroa, 30 miles north of



This is Tetiaroa, millions of years in the making by volcanoes rising from the ocean floor and protected by a barrier reef. The lagoon is so translucently blue you can see it from space.



Tahiti, envisioning it as an environmentally innovative utopia. After Marlon Brando died in 2004, the dream lived on: the stunningly beautiful The Brando resort opened in 2014 with eight of his fourteen children in attendance.

A private air terminal was constructed at Tahiti's Faa'a International Airport for direct flights via Air Tetiaroa, which is the only way to access the resort.

Air Tetiaroa has four aircraft: two de Havilland Canada DHC6-300 Twin Otters, which were retrofitted respectively in 2016 (F-OKYB) and 2020 (F-OKRB) with the latest generation Garmin avionics in 14- and 15-passenger seating configuration; and a pair of Britten-Norman BN-2T Islanders, which were acquired newly built from B-N in 2014 (F-OKAB c/n 2310) and 2018 (F-OKKB c/n 2315), which seat six passengers.

The airline also offers charters to 47 French Polynesian airports in addition to those at Tahiti's Faa'a and Tetiaroa.

In keeping with Brando's vision, The Brando's 35 freestanding luxury villas were constructed to conserve resources, limit waste, and tread gently on the natural environment.

This pioneering approach has led The Brando to become the first resort globally to receive the prestigious LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum Certification. Each villa was built to use fewer resources and reduce waste. Solar panels serve much of the resort's energy needs and excess energy is even stored across lithium batteries to power the island at night.

The flight to The Brando is a short, spectacular 20-minute experience, and once you land, you're met by staff who take you for a drink at the bar by the lagoon. An original check-in, to say the least! With its 36 exclusive straw-roofed villas, hidden among the foliage of the rainforest, The Brando is, to say the least, a refuge in the heart of nature, ideal for a change of scenery and an escape.

...Only problem is you'll need to spend nearly £30,000 for a 7-night stay!



The Brando Islanders: top F-OKKB (Air Tetiaroa) and bottom F-OKAB (BNH Collection)



FROM THE ARCHIVE

THIRD-LEVEL SERVICE, AMERICAN STYLE

David Wooley looks at the operations of Viking Airways - *Flight magazine* 22 May 1969

(Pictures are from the original article, hence poor quality)

Do you want to start a third-level airline? First, find yourself an off-shore island (preferably inhabited) and run a shuttle service between it and the mainland; endear yourself to the local population so that they feel that it's their own airline and they're proud of it; clamp down ruthlessly on the frills of the service, but don't stint the publicity - make sure that everybody knows just who you are and what it is you do; put on a high, frequency of service; and then, when you're on your feet, go public.

This, very roughly, is what Tom Corwin did when he started Viking Airways, and his shares sold like hot cakes on the stock market. It all happened in the USA, of course, and it is a typical success story from the great third-level explosion which started three years or so ago and is still going strong.

But things that happen over there have a tendency to repeat themselves later elsewhere, and the signs of something stirring in the third-level world are strong in Britain. There are differences, of course, between the USA and Europe, not least of which is the fact that over there you don't have to go to the Civil Aeronautics Board [now CAA] to ask for a route licence if your aircraft are less than 12,500lb in gross weight. You just pick your route and wade right in. But, so of course does your competitor.

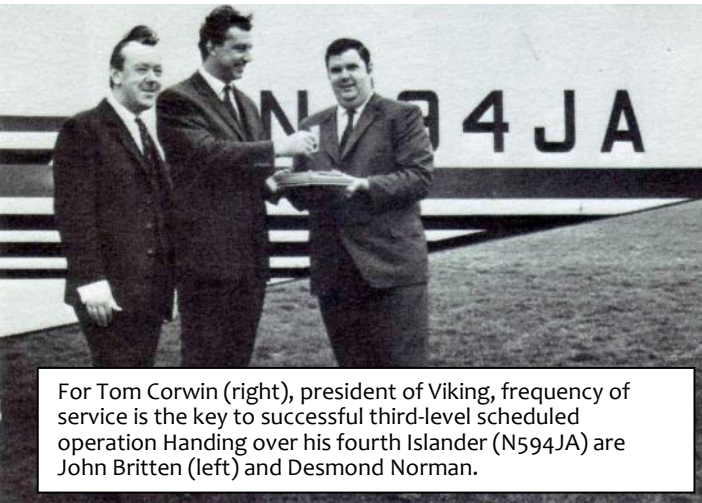
Mr Corwin runs Viking Airways - 38 employees, including 16 pilots - on the lines indicated, although the island shuttle service is no longer his only scheduled route. But he does pin his faith on four main tenets. First, he offers a reasonably high frequency service in order to attract the traffic. Second, he keeps down costs - for instance, he staffs terminal points with one employee who is reservations clerk, dispatcher and baggage loader all rolled into one. At Boston, terminal facilities are shared in a co-operative with four other air-taxi companies.

The Viking "grub run" - groceries are delivered to Block Island from mainland supermarkets on a "same-day" service.



At the same time he cuts aircraft operating costs to the bone by pushing utilisation through the ceiling. Third, he looks after the publicity side.

The fourth factor concerns aircraft. Tom Corwin started Viking Airways by buying a fixed base operator at Westerly, Rhode Island, which was offering air-taxi services and running two small flying schools, one there and one at Newport, RI. Equipment surviving from these beginnings includes three Piper Aztecs and four Cessnas (two 206s and two 182s). None of



For Tom Corwin (right), president of Viking, frequency of service is the key to successful third-level scheduled operation. Handing over his fourth Islander (N594JA) are John Britten (left) and Desmond Norman.

these seemed the answer for scheduled services, and Mr Corwin turned his attention to the Britten-Norman Islander, becoming on February 1, 1968, the first American operator to take delivery of one. The Islander, he found, would offer slightly better hourly costs than the Aztec, with up to nine seats instead of five.

The following passage may look like a quote from an Islander brochure, but it is noteworthy in being an extract from the prospectus put out by underwriters when Mr Corwin put Viking on the public stock market. This document adopts

a tone of studied pessimism, although quite unsuccessfully, if its intention was to discourage share speculators.

"Viking's management," says the prospectus, "believes that the Islanders [it now has four] are particularly suited to its air taxi and charter operations for several reasons. Because of the relatively large number of revenue seats and relatively modest purchase cost of an Islander when compared to other aircraft of similar purchase cost or capacity, the potential return on investment and profitability of operation ... is considered greater than otherwise would be the case.

"The STOL capability ... enables Viking to use these aircraft at major metropolitan air terminals equipped with STOL runways (such as La Guardia, New York, and Logan International, Boston) with a minimum of time spent unproductively holding while airborne, waiting for clearance to land, and with a minimum of turnaround time ... The manufacturer of the Islander estimates that 95% of the parts for repair of the aircraft are available locally in the United States.

"Viking's management believes that the Islander is unusually well suited to the short-haul type of air-taxi and charter operations in which the company is engaged."

When Viking took delivery of its second Islander the company believed that demand for the type was increasing at a greater rate than Britten-Norman's capacity to produce it, two more were ordered at about the same time.

The transition from fixed-base operations to scheduled services is a deliberate process which is still continuing, unhindered, as has been mentioned, by the need for route licences. (Technical matters are of course controlled by the FAA, and in theory fares need the approval of the State authorities, but as will be seen later this is more or less a formality in Viking's case.)

Scheduled services began because of the proximity of Block Island, lying off the Rhode Island coast about 17 miles from Westerly. The island, which has a small permanent population (under 400) and anything up to 12,000 visitors at any one time during the summer season, received its first scheduled services from Viking - four round trips a day in December 1966. In practice a good many more services are operated as the demand arises. The alternative to the 12min flight is a 1½hr crossing by ferry.

Viking also operates what it calls its "grub run" for the islanders - grocery orders telephoned to a mainland supermarket by noon on three days a week are delivered by air before 1630hr on the same day. Such a service has achieved considerable popularity with the inhabitants. But more popular still is an air ambulance service run free of charge (and without subsidy) in case of emergency. There are about 30 such cases a year. Imaginative moves such as these have generated a spirit of loyalty to what is felt to be the island's own airline.

Early in 1968 Mr Corwin started a Providence-Newport (Rhode Island) service, with eight round trips a day, increased to 11 since the beginning of this year. With the opening, early this year, of two routes into Logan International, Boston, from Providence and Newport, the airline has moved further out into the mainstream of US domestic competition. On the Providence-Boston route Viking offers seven round trips a day, and its competitors are Allegheny, Eastern, American and Mohawk, which between them offer another 11 services.

Viking is offering competition based on service and convenience, rather than on low fares; a 14-mile single journey costs \$6.40. The airline charges \$10.48 for a single journey between Providence and Boston, a distance of 50 miles. The big airlines charge a little less for the journey - \$10 - and so the official approval of Viking's rates is more or less automatic. Viking's carefully nurtured local personality stands it in good stead in attracting the customers, about 90% of whom, on the two Boston routes, are interline passengers continuing to other destinations. Of 500,000 passengers carried altogether last year about half continued their journeys with other airlines.

To assist with interlining, agreements for through ticketing have been made with trunk-route carriers, and Viking services are listed in the OAG timetable. This aspect of marketing arrangements is regarded with increasing enthusiasm by the bigger US carriers, who last year suddenly dropped their vociferous campaign against third-level operators. Now the airline salesman is helping to fill third-level seats.

The revenue seat-mile yield on Viking's services varies between routes, but on average, the company claims, break-even load factor for the Islander is reached with only two seats full. This is based on the very high utilisation of 2,400hr a year, obtained by such measures as rapid turn-round times (3-4min average is the target), and double-shift maintenance at the company's Westerly engineering base. The comparative figures suggested by Britten-Norman are a break-even load factor of 3.7 seats sold, on an annual utilisation of 1,000hr.

Maintenance follows a policy of progressive removal and replacement of components, and the spares holding is kept to a minimum, which includes two spare engines and a propeller. It worries Mr Corwin not in the slightest that the manufacturer of his Islanders is a comparatively small concern on the other side of the Atlantic, since almost everything on the aircraft is in standard use in American general aviation. Here indeed is one of the Islander's strongest selling points in the USA.

Unserviceability with the Islander has, in Viking's experience, been minor. The first aircraft was delivered in February 1968 and the first delay for mechanical reasons occurred the following November. The worst hold-up so far lasted less than 4hr. Each aircraft goes off line for major routine overhaul for two days after every 1,500hr flying.

Navigational aids

The radio equipment carried in the Islanders includes twin VOR, ADF, a transponder and ILS.



Mr Corwin is enthusiastic about Decca, particularly the Mk 15, and regards it as a potentially important tool for the conduct of STOL operations in busy areas. But, he says, Viking does not need it just yet. The Block Island flights are operated with one pilot, but for IFR flights into Boston two are carried, reducing the revenue accommodation from nine seats to eight. Weather minima at Boston are 200ft and 1 mile.

Advertising and public relations are the subject of expenditure running to 70% of total revenue - a high figure even by American standards, the US airline average being nearer 32%. "We keep plugging the image of Viking," says Mr Corwin, "on television, newspapers and billboards." He aims to get an editorial mention on local radio at least once a week. Advantage is taken of a little known service from mass circulation magazines: even Life offers local advertising (alongside international editorial) at \$824 a page. And if, after all, the publicity generates 200 extra seats a month, says Mr Corwin, then it pays for itself.

Viking returned a loss of \$8,157 last year. This year, Mr Corwin intends to break even. From now on he plans to double his revenue every year. Equipment plans for the foreseeable future revolve around the Islander. Mr Corwin likes the Twin Otter, and acknowledges that it offers similar seat-mile costs; but it is too big for his present operations. As he keeps emphasising, with the Islander one is only trying to sell eight or perhaps nine seats, and one only has to sell two of them.

The contrast between this outlook and that found so often on European domestic routes, where even Viscounts soldier on over short sectors at limited frequency with sometimes appalling load factors, could not be greater. Analogies can be pushed too far, and perhaps the Viking seat-mile yield is higher than the European market would stand. Moreover the British tax system does not foster rapid expansion along lines pursued by Mr Corwin. But a new approach is worth further investigation; and as he himself sums it up: "Frequency of service! - I love that phrase."

Viking Airways Fleet:

- N581JA** c/n 12 f/flight 29.12.67, delivered 2.68. Aircraft fate: cancelled 6.86 as N900GD
- N582JA** c/n 19 f/flight 22.3.68, delivered 1.69 Aircraft fate: written off 5.6.87 as YV-230C
- N583JA** c/n 39 f/flight 12.12.68, delivered 1.69 Aircraft fate: written off 23.5.85 as C-GPCF
- N594JA** c/n 61 f/flight 27.3.69 delivered 5.69 Aircraft fate: written off 25.1.99 as HP-987XI

Note: Viking Airways sadly went bankrupt on 26.10.70 and the Islander fleet was dispersed. N581JA went back to distributor Jonas Aircraft, N582JA was sold in Iceland, N583JA went to Virginia Air Cargo and N594JA went to Morris Air Services.

Next issue we will feature New England Airlines who took over the Block Island services in 1971, set up by former Viking Airways pilot, Bill Bendokas.

FLORIDA ROUND UP

ISLANDER SIGHTINGS IN FLORIDA – MAY 2024

by Tony Dann

(All photographs by the Author)

The month of May had me visiting Southern Florida for the second time this year. The trip in February was a full on aviation trip whereas the May one was a holiday, although those of you that know me will know there will always be room for a diversion if an Islander is nearby en-route. So not far off my holiday route I'd found three Islanders I had not yet come across



N700FK (c/n 2201) at Florida Keys Marathon International Airport 15 May 2024.

before, these being N700FK, N685KW and N97TS. I had been in touch with the operators of the first two for possible viewing via email and the third one would be just luck on the day.

So first on my list was BN2T N700FK c/n 2201. operated by the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District (FKMCD). This was one of two BN2T's operated by the FKMCD, the other one being N770FK c/n 2144 which was sold in March, going to a new owner and pastures new in Dallas, Texas. N700FK like its sister ship is currently for sale with accompanying spare parts and tools but fortunately for me was still resident at its base at the Florida Keys Marathon International Airport. I had arranged a morning visit on Wednesday May 15th to see her. Fortunately for me the aircraft had been pulled out of the hangar and was being hosed down giving me a better photo opportunity. The aircraft was still in the colours of its previous operator the Royal Oman Police. As I said, N700FK is now redundant and up for sale as the FKMCD have moved to an all helicopter operation. I'd like to thank Chad and Edgar of the FKMCD for taking their time out to accommodate my visit.

Second on my list was N685KW c/n 2120. another BN2T operated by Air Key West. Unfortunately for me when I was going to be in Key West no one was going to be available for me to view her..... one for another day! This aircraft actually does regular trips from Key West to Havana, Cuba. So next time if I have a spare \$695 then I'll take a trip to Havana, one way of getting a guaranteed viewing and plenty of Islander photo time!

The third Islander on my list was BN2A N97TS c/n 847. [See picture on page 20] Allan Wright had sent me information that this had been seen at Pompano Beach Airpark a couple of weeks prior to my trip. So on my first day in the area I took the gamble and set off for the short journey from my hotel at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport to Pompano Beach Airpark. After initial disappointment I eventually found her parked out in the open air and in a photographable position.



YV3356 (c/n 533) North Perry 19 May 2024.

So as the Meat Loaf song goes “Two Out of Three Ain’t Bad” or so I thought! A couple of days later my brother contacted me to say a Venezuelan Islander had been seen at North Perry Airport, Pembroke Pines. It had been reported there in mid April, it was now mid May but as it was only a twenty mile drive away from where I was staying I took another gamble and set off in anticipation. This time it didn’t take a lot of searching, as soon as I arrived YV3356 was observed out in the open and again in a photographable position. At the time I didn’t know any history on this aircraft but later was informed by Allan that it was c/n 533 a



N138LW (c/n 138) at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport 18 May 2024.

N779KS (c/n 779) at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport on 20 May 2024.





Above: N200MU BN-2A-27 Islander c/n 78 arriving at FXE after a flight from Walker's Cay Airport, Bahamas, 18 May 2024, and (below) N131JL BN-2A Islander c/n 225 of returning to FXE after a flight from South Bimini, Bahamas, 20 May 2024.



N298TA Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport, 17th February 2024.



former Belgian Army aircraft. Two days after my visit it was registered on the FAA register as N533BN.

As I mentioned, my hotel in the area was at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport (FXE) and this airport has two Islander operators these being Tropic Air Charters and Island Air Charters Inc.

Between them they operate eleven Islanders and as the name states these airlines only operate them on a charter basis and do not have any scheduled services. I took a trip round Tropic Air Charters in February to see their newest acquisition N298TA c/n 711 and this was featured on the BNAPS Facebook site then and I was told that a good time to catch the Islanders is normally first thing in the morning before they head off onto what seems regular trips towards the Bahamas with the occasional flight inland. I had seen most of the Islanders at FXE but N138LW of Island Air Charters Inc had eluded me by being stuck on jacks in the back of their hangar on previous visits. Fortunately this time it was sitting outside and another photo opportunity was taken.

So there we have it, quite a productive trip with the bonus Venezuelan Islander making up for one missed at Key West. Do I hear a Cuban tourist visa calling!.....

PHILIPPINES' BANGSAMORO AIRWAYS



A pioneering airline company to service the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and other parts of the country flew its maiden flight Zamboanga-to-Sulu on 24 April. Bangsamoro Airways will serve a network of routes in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region, located in the southwestern portion of the island of Mindanao.

According to a statement from the BARMM government, the airline will initially fly to Zamboanga and Jolo (Sulu) from Cotabato City, carrying up to nine passengers. According to Mohammad Pasigan, chairman of the Bangsamoro Board of Investments, the start-up will primarily serve as a charter service for government officials, medical workers, and investors.

The "long travel time and routes" between BARMM capital Cotabato City and the region's many islands and remote townships have prevented the effective delivery of government and health services, something Bangsamoro Airways is designed to overcome.

A group of Filipino and Malaysian businesspeople own Bangsamoro Airways and that the holding company is known as Federal Airways Inc. Bangsamoro has accessed at least two aircraft via Fliteline Aviation, a Bulacan-based flight training school that also runs an aerial taxi service. Images circulated by the BARMM government last week when announcing the launch of Bangsamoro Airways included a ten-passenger BN-2A-21 RP-C2138 (c/n 445) and a six-passenger Piper (twin piston) PA-23 Aztec. Both are painted in Bangsamoro's livery.

The airline will also accept chartered flights, according to airline executives. It plans to open flights to Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia, after a year of its operation.

"Bangsamoro Airways is a small airline with a big heart to serve the people. We are humbled to be given the support and opportunity to pioneer the first BARMM-incorporated airline in the region," Bangsamoro Airways said in a statement.

The Islander RP-C2138 had previously been operated by Fliteline Aviation, Pacific Airways and Philippine Aero Transport. Built in Gosselies in 1975 the BN-2A-21 was originally registered G-BCZW, and was delivered to the Philippines in June 1975.

B-N Aircraft News *from BN Historians*

?? (BN-2-??) **8R-DLC** Noted at Ogle 4.8.23. Is coloured all over white with red trim.

7 (BN-2A) C-GSAD Structural Aviation. To Guérette Aviation Inc, trading as Matane Air Services, Matane, Quebec, Canada. 11.4.24.

32 (BN-2A) G-AWNT Precision Terrain Surveys, Edenbridge, Kent. Export CofA applied for in January 2024. Possibly going to SAS PixAir Survey, Rouen-Boos, France, who have operated the aircraft since 2019. This is the oldest British registered BN-2 and it has only ever carried one registration – G-AWNT which was registered 2.8.68. First flight was 7.9.68.

43 (BN-2A-26) ZK-REA Roraima Airways, Georgetown, Guyana. Noted at Ogle 4.8.23 at Art Williams and Harry Wendt Aeronautical Engineering School.

216 (BN-2A-7) 8R-GHM Trans Guyana Airways, Georgetown, Guyana. Withdrawn from use following runway excursion 10.12.13. Noted at Georgetown 9.4.23 stored dismantled.

250 (BN-2A-7R) XC-DIS Coordinacion de Transportes Aereos del Estado, Tuxtla Gutierrez, Chiapas, Mexico. To **XB-LPA** mid-2022. Noted at Chiapas 11.10.23.



265 (BN-2A-7R) HK-1241 after many years of being out of service, this aircraft has now been rebuilt and looks almost ready for service. It carries the markings of CALAMAR Colombia, and was seen at Villavicencio, Colombia in October 2023.

311 (BN-2A-26) PJ-SEA Dividivi Air, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles. It has now come to light that this aircraft was due to be delivered to Diamond Air Shuttle, St Kitts & Nevis as **V4-ADD** prior to becoming PJ-SEA in 2005. The sale fell through and became C-FFXS before delivery to Divi Divi Air in 9.05.

323 (BN-2A-8) YV2925 Reinaldo Roldan, Marquez Mejias, Venezuela. 5.23. Written off Aripichi airstrip, Bolivar State 22.5.23. This c/n is now confirmed. Ex YV258T.

333 (BN-2A-27) C-GHRK Great River Aviation, Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada. Ferried to Tuvalu 1.3.24; arrived in Hawaii after 16 hour flight from Santa Maria, California to Kalaeloa, Hawaii. Two more legs to Fiji prior to destination of Funafuti, Tuvalu. To Air Tuvalu Airlines, Funafuti, Tuvalu as **T2-...**

353 (BN-2A-8) XB-PVZ Roberto Ruis, Bachigualato, Culiacan, Sinaloa, Mexico. To **XB-DGO** Durango, Mexico. 4.10.19.

VH-89M (c/n 816) at Hobart Cambridge on 29.2.24 (Yiwen Song/Jet Photos)



403 (BN-2A-26) G-ITTE JAGS Aviation, Georgetown, Guyana. 4.7.23. G-ITTE cancelled 20.7.23. To **8R-BGS**.

417 (BN-2A-21) N130PC Sky West Aviation, Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. Cancelled 9.2.24 to VP-A...

433 (BN-2A-20) G-BCWR Fuselage used as an instructional airframe by the Joint Aircraft Recovery and Transportation Squadron (JARTS) at MoD Boscombe Down. Moved to RAF Waddington 21.1.24.

445 (BN-2A-21) RP-C2138 Flightline Aviation. To Bangsamoro Airways, Mindanao, Philippines. 4.24.

533 (BN-2B-21) YV381T Unknown operator, Venezuela. To **YV3356** noted at North Perry, Florida 4.24. YV3356 cancelled 26.3.24. To **N533BN** Valair, Ogden, Utah. 21.5.24.

736 (BN-2A-21) A2-ZED Moremi Air Services, Maun, Botswana. Stored outside at Maun; note on Google Earth 2023.

816 (BN-2A-27) YJ-RN1 New Caledonian Mining Company, Port Vila, Vanuatu. To Colville Aviation Services, Atkinsons Dam, Queensland, Australia. 5.12.23 as **VH-89M**.

N97TS (c/n 847) at Pompano Beach 4.4.24 (Urs Rutschmann)



818 (BN-2A-21) HP-1338CP Ceilos del Pacifico SA, Panama To ESAV Airlines, Ecuador. 2022 as **HC-CXK**. Damaged when veered off the runway on landing at San Cristóbal Airport 12.5.23 and suffered a further emergency landing on Galapagos 17.9.23. Returned to service. Written off 12.2.24 after ditching at sea 1km N off San Cristóbal Airport. All on board survived.

847 (BN-2A-26) C6-EAM Exclusive Aviation, Nassau, Bahamas. To Caribbean Executive Air Charter, Aventura, Florida. 20.10.23 as **N97TS**.

1040 (BN-2A Mk.III-2) N928MJ To Plane Sales and Leasing, Kalispell, Montana. 16.9.23. Noted at Fort Pierce 29.1.24 being worked on and partially painted grey overall.

2005 (BN-2A-26) N519LG Sawtooth Flying Service, McCall, Idaho, USA. Withdrawn from use at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport; noted dismantled 13.2.24.

2010 (BN-2A-26) C-GRNZ Great River Aviation, Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada. To 839748 Yukon Inc. 28.11.23, and back to Great River Aviation, Dawson, Yukon, Canada. 6.2.24.

2020 (BN-2A-26) N880GL Great Lakes Air, St. Ignace, Michigan. To New England Airlines, Westerly, Rhode Island. Delivered Alpena-Jamestown-Westerly 14.9.23. Registered to New England Airlines 4.1.24.

2144 (BN-2T) N770FK Florida Keys Mosquito Control District, Marathon, Florida. Sold. Listed by FAA as "registration pending", Bedford, Texas 4.24. Left Marathon 19.3.24 and ended up at the North Texas Regional Airport on 20.3.24. Flown 3 short flights since (last was 7.6.24).

2174 (BN-2B-26) G-BKOK Registered to Islander Aircraft, Cumbernauld, Scotland. 8.12.23. It presumed this is stored at Cumbernauld.

2221 (BN-2B-20) HP-1550 Angueira Realty Group, Panama City, Panama. To Anguilla Air Services, Wallblake Airport, Anguilla. 2023 as **VP-AXA**. First noted at Saint Maarten 13.12.23. [Note: This is **not** c/n 2153 (ex PJ-WED) as reported in some places on the internet. c/n 2221 confirmed by reliable source.]

G-HEBO (c/n 2268) at Stornoway 12.4.24 for the inaugural service to Benbecula. (Julie Simper)



2223 (BN-2T) G-BRPC Islander Aircraft, Cumbernauld. To FR Aviation, Bournemouth, Dorset. 27.12.23. Trading as Draken Europe.

2230 (BN-2B-26) YJ-AL3 (2) Air Taxi, Port Vila, Vanuatu. Substantially damaged during landing at Sola, Vanuatu 31.1.24.

2268 (BN-2B-26) G-HEBO George Cormack, Cumbernauld. Operated by Direct Flight 4.24. Flew first scheduled service Stornoway to Benbecula 12.4.24 for Hebridean Air Services.

MD-1 (c/n 2276) of Botswana
Defence Force at Pretoria
6.3.24. (Austin Ferreira)



2276 (BN-2T) A2-MOA Botswana Ministry of Agriculture. To Botswana Defence Force, Gaborone, Botswana. 3.24 as **MD-1**. Noted at Pretoria 6.3.24 doing engine runs after 2 months of maintenance in hangar.

2277 (BN-2T) CN-GEA GEA, Rabat, Morocco. 4.5.23. We now know this is operated by Gendarmerie Royale.

2287 (BN-2T) G-BVSK Islander Aircraft, Cumbernauld. To Gama Aviation, Farnborough, Hampshire. 5.10.23.

2301 (BN-2B-20) G-CZNE Skyhopper, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. To Cormack Aircraft Services, Cumbernauld, Scotland. 21.3.24. Has been stored at Cumbernauld since late 2021.

3000 (BN-2B-20) G-OBNC Britten-Norman. Registered 9.2.05 as a BN-2B-20 and was intended to become the BN-2C prototype, but not built. Registration cancelled 15.11.23.

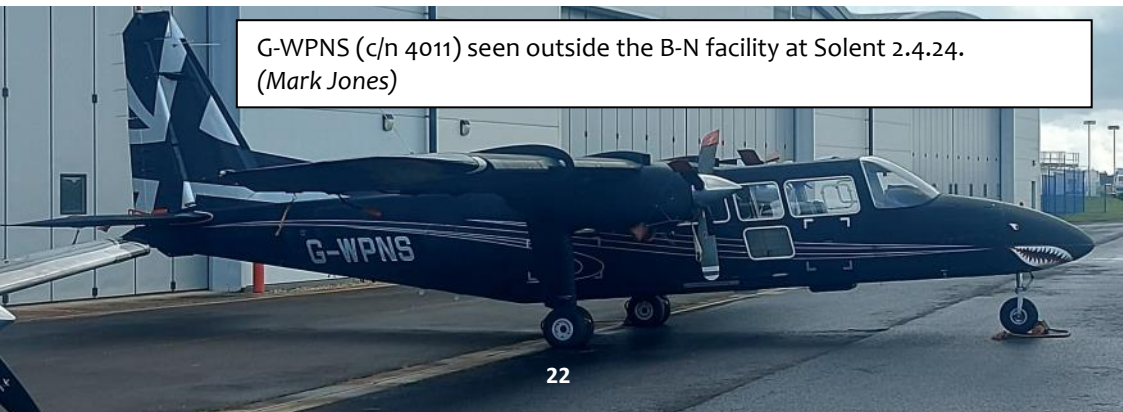
4006 (BN-2T-4S) N62KS KASI International. Not taken up. To Kalusair Services, North Lancaster, Ontario, Canada. 16.8.23 as **M-KASI**. First BN-2 on Isle of Man register. Delivery route: Tallinn - Roskilde 5.9.23, Roskilde-Belfast 5.9.23, Belfast - Wick 18.9.23, Wick-Vagar-Keflavik 19.9.23, Keflavik-Kulusuk-Kangerlussuaq 20.9.23, Kangerlussuaq-Iqaluit-Goose Bay 21.9.23, Goose Bay-Montreal Saint Hubert 22.9.23.

4011 (BN-2T-4S) G-WPNS Cranfield Aerospace Solutions (CAeS), Cranfield, Bedfordshire. List as for sale by CAeS and to be marketed by Cormack Islander Aircraft, Cumbernauld. Noted outside B-N at Solent 2.4.24.

The following aircraft with Britten-Norman were registered to Britten-Norman Aerospace Ltd on 31.5.24:

G-DLRA c/n 2140, G-BKJM c/n 2162, G-BLNE c/n 2184, G-BLNV c/n 2197 and G-BWPV c/n 4012.

G-WPNS (c/n 4011) seen outside the B-N facility at Solent 2.4.24.
(Mark Jones)



BRITTEN-NORMAN LTD'S FIRST AIRCRAFT*

In BNAPS News July 2014 issue, Peter Graham wrote about the construction of the Druine Turbi G-APFA (c/n PFA232), which was the first aircraft built by Britten-Norman Ltd., formed in 1954. The Turbi was built in 1956/57 and the project was filmed as part of a current affairs TV programme "This Week".



G-APFA at Sywell in 1967. (BNAPS)

The PFA – Popular Flying Association was looking for a two seat light aircraft that could be flown around the country to promote its aims. Roger Druine had designed the single seat Turbulent, a type that became very popular in the UK from the late 50's through the adoption of the type by the Tiger Club and series production by Rollasons at Croydon.

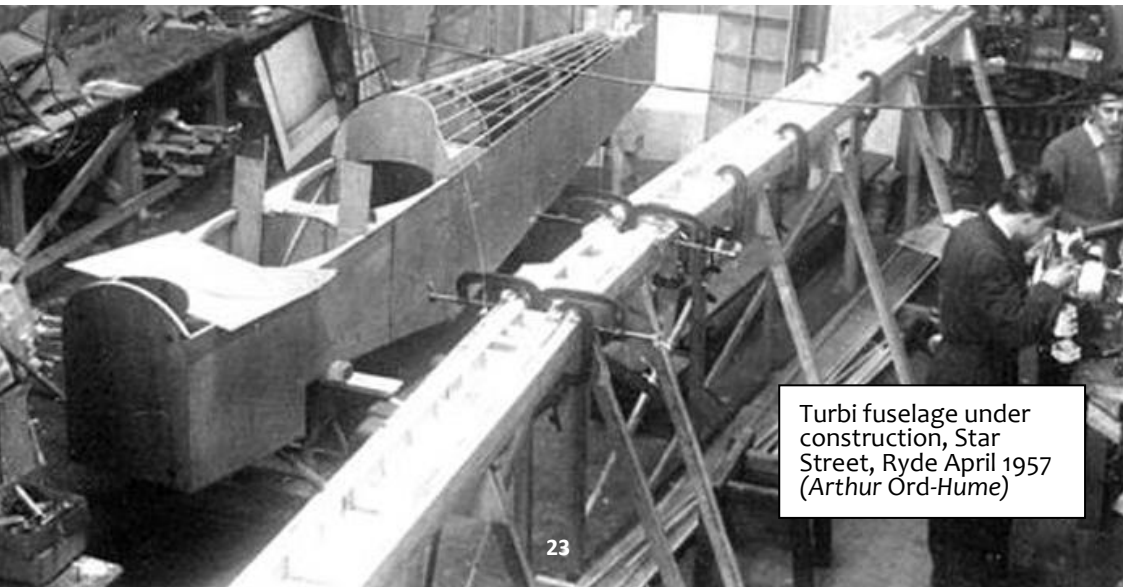
The PFA asked John and Desmond, to build the aircraft, who of course they knew from the BN-1F Finibee project, and agreed to take on the contract. At that time, the company occupied Unity Hall in Star Street, Ryde, owned by the Britten family, which is where construction started in 1956.

Work progressed well at Star Street, if behind the intended schedule due other interests, and the structurally completed fuselage, wing and empennage were transported by the local furniture removers, Lacey's, to the hangar at Bembridge Airport. By the time that the aircraft came to be registered, the official view of 'special registrations' had been marginally relaxed and it was possible to reserve G-APFA.

The aircraft was completed in May 1957 and the first test flight on 11 May 1957. The first flight "on camera" took place on 13 May 1957 in the hands of Harold Best-Devereux of the PFA. The next day "This Week" filmed the 'first flight' and their series was completed.

The aircraft was stored at Bembridge pending purchase by Harold Best-Devereux and the

*The BN-1F Finibee, John Britten and Desmond Norman's first project, was before the creation of Britten-Norman Ltd. in 1954. This makes the Turbi, the "first" Britten-Norman **Ltd.** aircraft.



Turbi fuselage under construction, Star Street, Ryde April 1957 (Arthur Ord-Hume)



G-APFA in 1957 after having a canopy fitted; seen with Harold Best-Devereux. (BNAPS)



Turbi finally departed Bembridge on 14 September 1957. The aircraft had a number of different owners up to 1984, when it was dismantled and stored at Cullompton near Dunkeswell Aerodrome, Devon, pending a rebuild.

In 2024 we now learn that one of the three current owners (since Feb 22), Malc Blackmore, relates that “the aircraft was a barn find about six years ago. It was dismantled and neglected in a barn near Dunkeswell, and we picked it up and stored it at

Dunkeswell for a few years before starting the rebuild about three years ago. It has had a spar mod to allow more all up weight, stripped back to bare wooden frame, repaired in places, recovered and is now in the process of painting. Once paint is finished it’s a rebuild onto the recovered wing with a C90 on the front!”

It is hoped that the aircraft will be flying again by the end of the year. We will report on the rebuild in later editions of BNAPS News Review.

*Inset: Turbi fuselage being rebuilt at Dunkeswell in 2022
Below: The painted fuselage in 2024. (both Malc Blackmore)*





Interisland Airways was launched in 1997, in Athens, Greece, by Michael Poulidakos and a partner. Michael tells us the story of his involvement with BN Islanders and Trislanders of Interisland Airways.

Aviation has been my passion since childhood. I started building plastic models at age nine, balsa flying models at twelve, started flying gliders at 14 and aircraft at 16. In 1980 I was in Texas, giving flight instruction on light singles and twins, before moving on to Beech Barons and Piper Navajos, DC3s and Beech 18s, doing night cargo runs.



By 1984 I had my ATPL and over 3,000 hrs TT and was really excited when Olympic Airways, of Onassis fame, hired me as a F/O on the B727. Olympic was expanding, so within the next five years I would fly the B727, B707, Airbus A300B4 and Boeing 747 before making Captain on the B727.

Olympic Aviation was operating two Islanders flying to the short runways of Paros, Mykonos, Kythira and other Greek Islands. So Islanders were a familiar sight in Greece. By 1984 the Islanders were replaced by Dornier 228s.

In 1994, I was a 737-400 Captain, flying all over Europe and the Middle East. I was an instructor and check pilot, and was getting tired of doing the same things over and over again, so I needed to look for another challenge.

The opportunity came in 1997. KAL Aviation, a small airline founded in 1993 with two BN Islanders, was sold to new owners. They planned to lease Metroliners to do night cargo runs to and from the islands. To raise capital, they sold one Islander to Roraima in Guyana (SX-DKA c/n 2114) and were planning on selling the second one, SX-DKB (c/n 2004) as well. I knew the previous owner and felt there was still future in his Island hopping Islander operation. I talked to the new owners and discussed with them possibility of buying the Islander, leasing it back to them, with us operating it under the KAL AOC. The deal was done, a partner was found to help finance the buy, and a pilot was recruited from the Athens Gliding Club. We would be using KAL's mechanics and offices.

1998 was a busy year. The Islander started flying in May and the operation was running well. We would fly five flights a day, ten in weekends and everybody was happy. Passengers found it comfortable for the 30-40 minutes legs, the travel agents were soon adding

Islander SX-DKB (c/n 2004) at Hellinikon Airport in 1995 (BNH Collection)





Islander SX-DKB in Interisland Airways colours.

additional legs, and new destinations. In July, we had our first setback. A crack was found in the area around the magneto housing. It was there when we bought the airplane, so KAL accepted responsibility and partially reimbursed us for removing the engine, sending it to London for repairs and reinstalling it. By September, we had our engine up and running, only to find out the season was practically finished. Lesson one learned was that mechanics can be unreliable; lesson number two: you cannot run a reliable operation with only one aircraft - you need to have a substitute, or the agents will not trust you.

1999 started off well. The Islander was reliable and we never missed a flight. We added cargo to our tourist operations, which provided additional flight hours and income. On Fridays we would typically take off at 07:30 full of cargo, seats removed and packed, fly from Athens Hellinikon Airport to Syros Island offloading cargo, then on to Mykonos. Would then unpack and reinstall seats, dead head to Naxos, pick up nine passengers for Athens connecting to LTU flights for Germany. From Athens we would pick up nine more for Naxos, remove seats and pack them, take a full cargo load from Mykonos and Syros to Athens. This was only VFR flying, so all week we were praying for good weather on Fridays.

The operation ran well, but the “what if non-scheduled maintenance required” scenario was bugging me. So, I started looking for alternatives and nothing was really available. Olympic Aviation was only using turbine aircraft by then, and competitors could not be trusted for providing an alternative if needed. Piper Chieftains were used by competitors at the time and looked good. They had speed, and passenger appeal. However, engine troubles were frequent and local operators were having trouble keeping them in the air reliably. Purchase cost was 60% more than an Islander at the time, and, of course, type dissimilarity would not help either.

Then I saw an ad. for a Trislander. It was based in Harare, Zimbabwe, and the price was reasonable, and history looked good. It was one of two that were originally sold to the Botswana Defence Force, flown there for a couple of years before they were acquired by United Air Services in Harare. I checked specs and numbers; they all looked great! I was wondering why they were so few flying compared to the Islanders, and then read about Aurigny and their operation. Sure, our route structure was similar and we almost always had perfect weather. Plus we could use the extra capacity too! My experience with the B727 had me convinced that three is the magic number of engines, as it allows you to operate safely and economically underpowered aircraft. DC10s and Tristars in the seventies confirmed what Ford and Junkers had discovered in the thirties! So, Trislander it was.



Trislanders Z-AIR (c/n 1054) & Z-UTD (x/n 1055) flying with United Air, Zimbabwe.



Acquaintance with Z-AIR and her lady Captain in typical operation.

I flew out to Zimbabwe and was flown in a Cessna 402 to where Z-AIR (c/n 1054) was operating from - a gravel runway taking sightseeing tourists to the view the nearby falls. The Trislander looked good, the lady Captain talked enthusiastically about her and I was hooked! Another three-engine airplane, - this time with the outside engines placed on the wings, where they should be - came into my life.

Back to Athens, financing arranged, talks with KAL to accept it on their AOC, talks with our CAA which accepted it as a same type to the Islander, ferry details arranged, ready for the ferry flight. We fitted it with internal tanks giving it an endurance of 12 hours! Plan was to fly direct to Entebbe, then on to Khartoum in Sudan, Luxor in Egypt, then on to Athens. At the time there was civil war in Sudan with a notam stating that anything flying less than 8,000ft might be shot at.

I was a bit sceptical about carrying almost a ton of fuel in internal tanks, being 30% over gross in a high density altitude airport, but the local pilot being officially PIC due to the Z registration, did not say much about it. At least we planned for a 7am departure, when temperatures would be in the twenties rather than thirties. The Trislander took a lot of the runway to take off - we barely cleared the trees at the end of the runway. "It's a three engine airplane", I was telling my friends who were worrying about the ferry flight, "what can go wrong with it"? I soon realized that performance wise, I was in a single with three times the probability of losing an engine. We landed at Entebbe almost ten hours later with all engines running well, thank God!

Suitably refuelled we took off again a couple of hours later for Khartoum. The plan was to cross Khartoum at night, to minimize chances of being shot at. What I did not know was that this was the time Victoria Lake mosquitos were returning from work, and they were hungry! We took off relieved that we had survived a mosquito attack on the ground. However, their attacks in the air were even more dangerous. There were times when visibility was very restricted due to the oncoming flocks of mosquitos. Soon our leading edges and propellers were contaminated with dead mosquito bodies, which made our badly overloaded Trislander perform even worse. I did not like the idea of flying like this all night, and asked Captain to return. We landed around 9pm, had a good dinner and comfortable sleep in a nearby hotel. All advice against night staying in Entebbe was unfounded, all worked out well. We decided to depart early, while the mosquitos were still sleeping!

After cleaning off the leading edges and props as well as we could, we departed Entebbe again and landed in Khartoum about eight hours later. Service was exceptionally fast, and we were able to take off again in less than an hour. Luxor was next, and I thought this was going to be easy, as I frequently flew there with Olympic. Little did I know that without the airline for “protection”, it would be a different ballgame. We arrived around 10pm with plenty of fuel and they asked us to hold due to traffic. Thirty minutes later, they gave us another thirty minutes to hold! Unbelievable, never had to hold with Olympic. We were over the runway for an hour, but unable to land. So close, yet so far away and so tired....

After finally landing, I thought our troubles would be over. Wrong again! A military truck came over and twenty armed soldiers surrounded our Trislander. Soon they would open doors, looking for I don't know what. Some of them were smoking and with our fuel tanks almost empty now and avgas fumes inside the fuselage, I was afraid we might explode. I followed advice I had been given for Entebbe and Khartoum - I had several dollar bills, and several packages of cigarettes. In the end I gave them all away in an effort to keep them off the airplane. I gave a twenty to their officer, and he disciplined the rest!

We desperately needed a toilet and a good rest, but they required a \$500 handling fee to take us to the terminal. We ended up peeing in our empty water bottles and sleeping in a still mosquito-filled aircraft, despite the avgas smell. We refuelled and decided to depart at sunrise, around 05:30. We requested start up at 05:30, with standby being the answer. Asked again and again, “standby” with no expected start up time. I decided to switch off radios, or we risked running out of battery power. Thankfully, had my ICOM with me. At 07:30 they told us we were unable to continue via Cairo, due to heavy IFR traffic and requested our intention. The alternative was to fly via the West Border, flying over famous locations such as El Alamein, and Sidi Barany, which would take an extra two hours over the six hours we had planned for Athens. We requested extra fuel, but were advised it would take three to four hours - so forget it, just get the hell out of here and we will figure out our fuel issues later.

Over Heraklion, Crete, we transferred all fuel from internal tanks to mains and did a careful fuel calculation. We would overfly Milos Island, with an adequate runway but no fuel and could land there if necessary. Thankfully, winds were still favourable and consumption was now low due to light weight, so we made it to Athens eight hours later, with approximately thirty minutes fuel left.

Great to be back home! People were looking at the strange looking aircraft in disbelief, some of them found it ugly. I knew I'd better make it work or I would have to pay off its debt out of my salary.

A month later our CAA accepted it on KAL's AOC, so we started flying it commercially. I was not allowed to fly it commercially, but I was able to fly some empty legs and of course, did all required training. Loved it! We now had a choice and we would schedule the Islander or Trislander, depending on load. The Trislander was well accepted by passengers, agents and pilots alike. More so than the Islander, as I recall.



Z-UTD landed at Hellinikon on 18.5.01, so the two Trislanders met again at the airport.

As year 2000 was fast approaching, rumours about the new Athens airport being far more expensive than the old one were confirmed. Hellinikon Airport was to close down completely with the inauguration of the new Athens El Venizelos airport in March 2001. Landing fees would go 10 times up overnight! Overnight fees were so harsh, that Olympic considered leaving the planes at the Islands rather than Athens. Even with crew hotels and out of base allowance, it worked out to be cheaper than keeping the airplane overnight in Athens.

KAL and myself prepared as well as we could. I acquired a piece of land right next to the Sparta Airport, LGSP, where I built a hangar suitable for Islander / Trislander and also for Metroliner maintenance. I planned to keep airplanes at the islands or the Sparta hangar and only bring them to Athens when commercially necessary.

But what was killing airplanes, could benefit helicopters. I had been fascinated by helicopters since childhood. As I gained aviation experience, I appreciated the versatility and freedom they provided. However, helicopters were expensive to buy and maintain, unreliable and labour intensive; they were only afforded by air forces or millionaires. It was not until Frank Robinson designed the R22 in 1979, that an affordable, reliable, low cost helicopter became available. I was the first Greek to fly and take lessons in the newly produced R22A, as early as 1980, in Dallas, Texas. By 1990, the new four place Robinson R44 helicopter was produced and by 1999, it was equipped with hydraulic controls and pop out floats. I realized this version could become the versatile low cost charter helicopter the market was waiting for.

In early 2000, I got my PPL, CPL and FI(H) licenses. To acquire flight hours quickly, I had bought a Robinson R22 helicopter that was about to time expire. InterIsland Airways became a Robinson Dealer and Service Centre, eventually selling over 20 new helicopters in Greece and abroad. Later we became the first R66 Dealer, introducing the first R66 Mariner Turbine helicopter in Greece.

In late 2000, I received word that the second Zimbabwe Trislander was in danger at Harare, due to civil war and riots. It was offered for sale at a bargain price. I organised a quick sale to save it and Trislander Z-UTD (c/n 1055), was flown to Hellinikon Airport on 18 May 2001.

9/11 changed aviation forever; airlines suffered all over the world. In Athens, things would get even worse, making the use of light airplanes such as the Islander and Trislander uneconomical. This was a turning point for InterIsland Airways as well. As the Athens GA environment changed dramatically, my co-partner could no longer support the cash infusion required to keep the company in business and wanted out. I bought out his shares and he departed at a profit, so I now owned the whole company. Thanks to my employment with Olympic, all financial obligations were eventually paid for, and the company survived.

Olympic Airways closed in 2009. As an Airbus A340 Captain at the time, I had to move and fly out of places like Colombo, Jeddah and Kabul, once narrowly escaping a Taliban hotel attack there.

Over the next few years, InterIsland concentrated on the helicopter business, offering quality training, maintenance and after sales support to new Robinson helicopter pilots and



Trislander SX-CVM (c/n 1054) stored in the hangar at Sparta Airport.

owners. Trislander c/n 1055, Z-UTD, was sold in December 2008 to Unity Airlines of Vanuatu as YJ-OO19. [Note: registration SX-CPG was intended for this aircraft but was never officially registered to it.] Unity kept it until 2018 and it is now flying for Anguilla Air Services as VP-AJR, after an epic flight from Vanuatu via Hawaii and USA, which, I believe, holds the record for the longest ferry flight with one leg of 18 plus hours. Trislander c/n 1054, SX-CVM, is still at my hangar at the Sparta Airport, and Islander SX-DKB, c/n 2004 is parked at Megara Airport in Greece. I retired from the airline business in 2023, and I am selling both airplanes to concentrate on the helicopter business. I hope they are used profitably elsewhere.

InterIsland Airways eventually received CAA approvals for flight training, aerial works, cargo and maintenance organisation. It is still run by the same low cost, maximum performance, excellent quality of service philosophy. It enjoys an impeccable safety record of zero accidents, zero incidents, which we are proud of. Offers by potential investors to expand the company are always denied. Investors' decisions tend to be based on bottom lines; InterIsland's management decisions are passion driven, based on moral standards and the satisfaction of accomplishment. Despite the economic crisis in Greece, InterIsland Airways remains financially healthy and profitable, and is well positioned to take advantage of opportunities as they arise in the future. *(all pictures via the author, unless stated)*

A selection of InterIsland's Robinson helicopters.



ISLANDER & TRISLANDER NEWS

DUXFORD TRISLANDER 'FRESHENED UP'

The former Aurigny Trislander G-BEVT (c/n 1057) on display part of the British Airliner Collection owned by the Duxford Aviation Society (DAS) and on display at IWM Duxford was taken inside a hangar in March to have the paint refreshed for a week in March. It is now back on display outside at Duxford.



The puffin logo on the tail was also renewed. DAS had contacted Solent Sky (who own Trislander G-RLON) about getting puffin logos made for G-RLON (c/n 1008) as well. Originally each set of two logos was going to cost £150, but Aurigny kindly paid for the logos to be made. The picture on the right shows Tony Smart (left) and Bob Wright holding up the new decals in the Duxford office.

It is hoped that G-RLON will soon be moved from open storage at Solent Airport to Solent Sky museum in Southampton.

Trislander G-RLON has now been moved to the western side of Solent Airport.



B-N SAVED BY RE-FINANCING TAKE OVER

Following the very positive news from Britten-Norman last year of the return of production to the UK, in the later part of 2023 B-N appointed advisors to assist on exploring options to secure additional investment to secure the future of the company. In February it was announced that B-N had requested administrators to be appointed to manage re-financing options for the company.

This process was concluded on 22nd March with the announcement that the company had secured additional investment from Shelton Bidco Ltd., established by a group of financial investors led by 4D Capital Partners. Five B-N companies, B-N Group Ltd., Britten-Norman Ltd., Britten-Norman Aircraft Ltd., BN Defence Ltd. and BN Daedalus Ltd. were all placed into administration. The joint administrators, Interpath Advisory, then sold 100% of Britten-Norman Aerospace Ltd (known as BN Aviation Ltd to 29.2.24) to Shelton Bidco Ltd., who also acquired the assets of the 5 companies placed into administration for an undisclosed sum. Shelton Bidco also acquired the share capital of B-N's US companies, BN Aircraft Sales Inc. and Britten-Norman Inc.

The takeover has rescued 117 jobs over all of B-N's operation centres, which include head office at Bembridge, the sales office in London, the engineering site at Southampton, and at Solent Airport. Design and production approvals, and type certificate for the BN-2 Islander, have been transferred over to the new company.

The investment received is sufficient to ensure Britten-Norman can deliver its existing order backlog of both new-build and refurbished aircraft that extends for around 12 months or more, ensuring the delivery of the first wave of new-build aircraft.

On top of the cash injection, 4D Capital Partners is also providing management and business turnaround experience. It is seen that the private equity business would be involved with Britten-Norman for between two to five years, depending on how quickly its fortunes are revived.

Delivery of the first aircraft to come off the line – to the Falkland Islands Government Air Service – had been scheduled for May, but the upheaval experienced by the company means that target has been pushed back, with a handover now scheduled for later

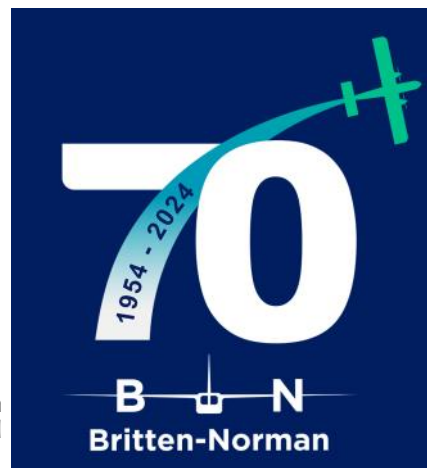
More at www.britten-norman.com/news/

70th ANNIVERSARY

Britten-Norman is celebrating its platinum anniversary in 2024, marking 70 years since the limited company was founded. John Britten and Desmond Norman started their business in 1954, on completion of their apprenticeships at de Havilland Technical School.

The company was conceived as an aircraft modification company before the two entrepreneurs identified a gap in the market for a high payload, short sector, STOL aircraft that is capable of operating in some of the most remote parts of the world with the minimum of infrastructure or support. 11 years later, the first Islander flew on 13.6.65.

B-N have announced that to celebrate the 70th Anniversary a range of commemorative products and events, will be unveiled leading up to the anniversary.



Project Fresson Lecture for Royal Aeronautical Society - Isle of Wight Branch May 2024

On 16 May 2024 the RaeS - Isle of Wight Branch 8th Sam Saunders Memorial Lecture was given by Cranfield Aerospace Solutions Ltd. Director of Engineering and Project Fresson Chief Engineer, Rob Marsh CEng FIMechE FRAeS at the Isle of Wight College Newport.

Rob Marsh has had a long career in engineering management beginning in 1992 with the Royal Air Force, holding various engineering management appointments. In 2006, he moved to the Ministry of Defence's Main Building as a Strategic Business Performance Specialist and in 2008 became a postgraduate student at the Canadian Forces College, studying the Joint Command and Staff Programme. In 2009, he was appointed Harrier Support Requirements Manager for the Harrier Project Team at Defence Equipment & Support. In 2010, he was appointed Commanding Officer of the Joint Force Logistics Unit with the Royal Air Force's British Forces South Atlantic Islands. In 2012, he became Head of Aircraft Availability and Air Safety at the Royal Air Force's Typhoon Force Headquarters. After 21 years service in the Royal Air Force in 2014 Rob joined Jaguar Land Rover as a Senior Programme Manager. In 2019, he moved on to Cranfield Aerospace Solutions as Director of Engineering and Chief Engineer for Project Fresson.

Members of the Cranfield Aerospace engineering team and visitors in the company development and experimental facility with BN Islander G-HYUK (*Cranfield Aerospace*)



On the day of the lecture BNAPS had planned for Rob Marsh to visit the local museum to view Islander G-AVCN but due to other commitments there was no time to spare during the day. However, BNAPS Chairman Bob Wealthy was able to spend a few minutes with Rob Marsh before his lecture started to give a briefing about BNAPS and the Islander restoration project. BNAPS interest in the background to the Project Fresson Islander G-HYUK (c/n 2272, formerly G-BUBP) was discussed and as a memento of his visit to the Isle of Wight Rob was given a copy of BNAPS News Review and a handout about the restoration of Islander G-AVCN.

In his very informative lecture, that was well attended, Rob Marsh presented the aims of Project Fresson to deliver the world's first zero emissions, passenger carrying flight, using hydrogen fuel cell propulsion. As head of engineering for the project Rob was able to give a unique insight into the engineering aspects and to present the relative merits of alternative approaches to zero (or low) emissions flight. Rob presented a comprehensive description of the part that Project Fresson will play in developing a sustainable future for aviation and the place of hydrogen fuel cells in aviation, hydrogen fuel cell electric propulsion concepts for aircraft and the associated engineering challenges, solutions and lessons learnt for their practical implementation for Project Fresson and the take-up of Hydrogen Fuel Cell technology.

PROJECT FRESSON NEWS

PROJECT FRESSON UPDATE



A number of news releases related to Project Fresson have appeared over the past few months and are summarised below:

Cranfield Aerospace Presents the Way Ahead for Sustainable Aviation Hydrogen Fuel Cell Electric Propulsion

Phase 1 - Prove

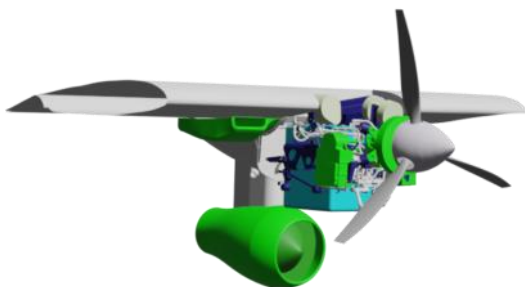
Phase 1 of our roadmap is “Project Fresson” – the conversion of a Britten-Norman Islander 9-seat aircraft from conventional fossil fuel to that of gaseous hydrogen propulsion.

This development is set to deliver the world’s first fully certified, truly green, passenger-carrying aircraft using hydrogen fuel cell technology.

- ◆ Britten Norman Islander - Conversion of 9-seat Britten-Norman Islander to hydrogen fuel cell propulsion due to fly in 2025.
- ◆ STC - Supplemental Type Certificate for the modification to be certified by 2026
- ◆ Zero-emissions - Enables world’s first zero-emissions passenger-carrying services
- ◆ Regulation & Certification - Drives regulation required to certify hydrogen technology on aircraft, in airports and in maintenance organisations, kickstarting the 3rd revolution of aviation
- ◆ Funding - Project Fresson is partly grant-funded by the Aerospace Technology Institute

Phase 2 – Exploit and Scale

- ◆ Adapt technology to multiple platforms with our proven aircraft & systems integration capabilities
- ◆ Passenger, cargo & ancillary applications
- ◆ 125kW – 500kW
- ◆ 2027 -2030

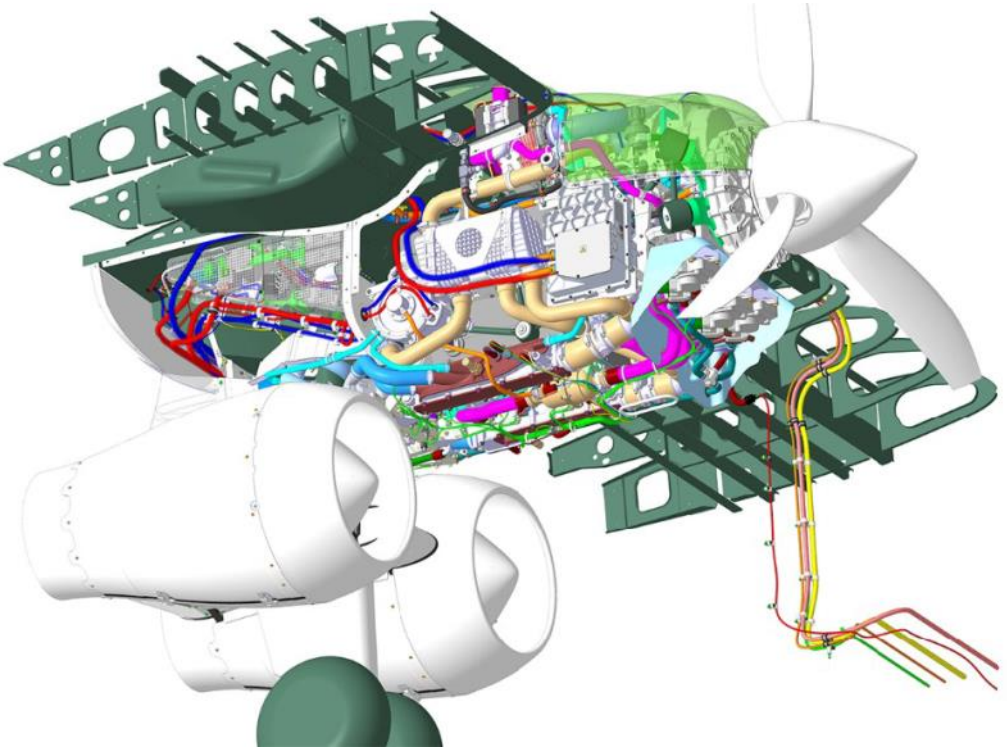


Phase 3 – Optimise

- ◆ New Aircraft Designs
- ◆ New aircraft design, optimized around hydrogen propulsion technology
- ◆ Up to 19 seats
- ◆ 1MW
- ◆ 2032+

The “miracle of packaging”: Cranfield Aerospace Solutions on the challenges of Hydrogen Fuel Cell Technology for Zero-Emissions Aircraft

Press release from Cranfield Aerospace March 7, 2024



Over the past few years, Cranfield Aerospace Solutions (CAeS) has been quietly pushing engineering boundaries in a quest to achieve zero-emissions flight and has now achieved a notable milestone with the successful integration design of its hydrogen fuel cell technology into the nacelle of an aircraft. This is an achievement that not only marks important engineering and technological progress but is also a significant step towards certification and commercialisation of the company’s zero-emissions technology.

At the core of CAeS’s mission is the development of a hydrogen fuel cell drive train that will be a safe, certifiable, and commercially viable solution for the aviation market. By packaging the entire full power system (hydrogen fuel cell system and motor) into the nacelle, CAeS has identified all the key technical and packaging challenges of designing a safe and efficient hydrogen power train and found solutions for them all. This milestone is crucial as it lays the groundwork for engaging with regulators about certifying the technology for safe flight, a pivotal step towards realising the vision of commercially viable zero-emissions aviation.

While hydrogen fuel cell technology itself is not new, adapting it for aviation poses unique challenges. The successful integration of a 240kW system (110% of the power of the engine that it replaces) into the nacelle showcases CAeS's ability to overcome these challenges and is a "miracle of packaging" that underscores the feasibility of hydrogen-electric propulsion systems for aircraft. Moreover, this achievement positions CAeS as a leader in commercialising zero-emissions aircraft, contributing to the industry's efforts to mitigate its environmental impact.

Behind this milestone lies a formidable engineering effort. The design team faced numerous challenges in packaging the hydrogen fuel cell along with its electrical components, cooling equipment, pipe routing, and cable routing. Space within the nacelle is extremely limited, making it particularly difficult to find an effective solution that also meets all the stringent safety requirements that we have set ourselves.

The forward section of the nacelle houses the Hydrogen Fuel Cell System (HFCS) itself, the HFCS Balance of Plant (BoP), an electric motor, inverters and controllers, a pitch control unit, and all the electrical cabling/routing and cooling systems for the HFCS. The rear nacelle contains the ground power interface and the high voltage power distribution system, each with its own cooling and packaging challenges. 4

Mounted around the existing main landing gear is the structure for the HFCS heat exchangers, which includes relevant pipework for the HFCS cooling system. This integration required meticulous planning, iterative design, and close coordination with partners Reaction Engines, to ensure optimal performance.

Looking ahead, CAeS sees numerous opportunities to build on this achievement and drive further innovation in sustainable aviation. With the successful packaging of the HFCS into the nacelle, CAeS can explore integration into other aircraft platforms and applications, an example of this being the recently announced collaboration with Dronamics that showcased the potential for zero-emissions middle mile cargo UAVs, highlighting the versatility and applicability of CAeS's technology across various aviation sectors.

It should be noted that this demonstrator is only the start. By dealing with the whole system architecture, its packaging, and its thermal performance in relation to a real aircraft, CAeS has unlocked further system and sub-system optimisation opportunities, which will be applied to its commercial offering resulting in significant improvements to the operational performance and other benefits to improve customer experience.

The development of this system has created a strong culture of innovation within the team, building capabilities, technologies, and opportunities to develop the next evolution in HFCS power train technology, and its application and integration to make zero emissions flight a reality. By doing this, CAeS will continue to push boundaries and drive innovation and are committed to shaping a greener future for the aviation industry.

Cranfield Aerospace Solutions and Stratus 9 set sights on the first zero-emissions fractional aircraft co-ownership programme in the United States

Press release from Cranfield Aerospace February 16, 2024

Stratus 9 (S9), an innovator in private aviation and fractional ownership, today announced plans to acquire 10 (with options for up to 15) of Cranfield Aerospace Solutions' (CAeS) hydrogen propulsion conversion kits for the B-N Islander aircraft. The deal, valued at over \$20M, paves the way for the first zero-emissions fractional ownership programme in the United States.

Stratus 9 is simplifying co-ownership of airplanes, radically improving the efficiency and sustainable use of aircraft and transforming the way aircraft are purchased, financed, and owned.



“Part of our core vision at Stratus 9 is to fly clean. To do that, we need to decarbonize aviation in a way that is technically and economically viable, which is why we started by fractionalizing existing aircraft that are underutilized. This also makes private jet ownership more accessible; it just makes sense. True change demands bold moves. In addition to making existing ops more sustainable, we’re also investing in the future - scaling and advancing groundbreaking technologies like CAeS’s hydrogen fuel propulsion is key to achieving a cleaner, bluer sky,” said Zeeshan Moha, Co-CEO of Stratus 9.

Scheduled for commercial certification in 2026, the CAeS hydrogen-fuel cell propulsion system will be integrated into the Islander aircraft via a Supplemental Type Certificate (STC), resulting in a zero-carbon emissions aircraft providing eco-friendly and efficient regional travel. S9 is positioned to become the primary launch partner in the US consumer market by 2027, and marks CAeS’ entry into the US market.

CAeS has already secured over 100 provisional orders from operators across the UK, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand, and is set to achieve first flight of the technology later this year. The collaboration with S9 soars beyond aircraft procurement, with both companies collaborating closely on infrastructure development, training programs, and defining aircraft modeling specifications for entry and FAA certification in the US.

S9’s aspiration is to be the inaugural zero-emissions fractional ownership program in the US; under this partnership, clients of S9 can own or co-own one of the world’s first zero-emissions aircraft—the hydrogen-powered Islander—underscoring S9’s commitment to providing sustainable aviation solutions to the consumer market.

CAeS’ CEO Paul Hutton says: “Our collaboration with Stratus 9 is a testament to the global recognition of CAeS’s hydrogen-propulsion technology as a transformative force in the aviation industry. We are excited to welcome Stratus 9 as our first customer for the hydrogen-powered Islander in the US, marking a significant milestone in our pursuit of sustainable flight. Together, we aim to redefine aviation standards, not just in aircraft systems design but also in fostering a greener future. This partnership reinforces our commitment to delivering innovative solutions that shape the next generation of aviation.

Plans to operate the world’s first hydrogen-electric aircraft in Orkney take flight

Press release from Loganair January 30, 2024

Loganair, the UK’s largest regional airline, and Cranfield Aerospace Solutions (CAeS), pioneers in zero-emissions flight, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which could deliver the world’s first commercial zero emissions air service in Orkney.

The MOU is the next step in Project Fresson – the development of hydrogen propulsion for Britten-Norman Islander aircraft – and aims to have the first operational hydrogen-electric Britten-Norman Islander aircraft flying in Kirkwall by 2027.

Loganair has been supportive of Project Fresson since its inception but the MOU between the two companies signifies an enhanced level of collaboration, leveraging their collective expertise. Their strategic alliance encompasses operational requirements and design, standards and regulations, infrastructure development, and stakeholder engagement. The ultimate objective is to ensure the commercial rollout of the hydrogen-powered Islander, with a specific target of introducing the world's inaugural hydrogen-electric Britten-Norman Islander into operational service within the Orkney region.

Driven by a commitment to sustainability, Loganair has set an ambitious goal of achieving Net Zero across its entire operations by 2040. The airline's proactive approach toward implementing sustainable aviation, includes the potential adoption of CAeS's hydrogen fuel cell technology into its Islander fleet.

Paul Hutton, CEO, Cranfield Aerospace Solutions, said: "This Memorandum of Understanding marks a significant stride toward achieving zero-emission flight in the Orkney Islands and potentially enabling the first zero emissions passenger air service, right here in the UK. Collaborating closely with Loganair, we aim to harness our combined experience and expertise to address the operational and infrastructure considerations, ultimately ensuring the successful deployment of the hydrogen-electric Britten-Norman Islander across Loganair's lifeline routes within the islands."

Peter Simpson, Executive Chairman, Loganair, said: "As an airline, we are doing everything we can to manage and mitigate the environmental impact of flying. Our Greenskies environmental programme, which offsets carbon emissions and invests in future flight technologies, is unique within the industry and our partnership with Cranfield Aerospace Solutions builds on the commitments we have made as part of this. "The short haul routes we operate in Orkney and the challenging weather conditions we face, make the ideal test bed for hydrogen-electric aircraft, and we are incredibly proud that we could be offering the world's first commercial zero emissions flights."

Project Fresson is named after Captain EE (Ted) Fresson who operated the first passenger flight between Inverness and Kirkwall 90 years ago, transforming Highlands and Islands travel and connecting the mainland and islands communities like never before.

The Duchess of Edinburgh Visits Cranfield Aerospace Solutions on 23 April 2024

Press release from Cranfield Aerospace Solutions 24 April 2024

The Duchess of Edinburgh visited Cranfield Aerospace Solutions at Cranfield on 23 April and was given an insight into Project Fresson, the development of hydrogen fuel cell electric propulsion technology and conversion of Islander G-HYUK as the propulsion system demonstrator aircraft.

The Duchess was warmly received by the Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, Susan Lousada, and distinguished local officials, including Chief Constable Trevor Rodenhurst, Chief Fire Officer Andrew Hopkinson, Marcel Coiffait, Chief Executive of Central Bedfordshire Council, and Professor Dame Helen Atkinson DBE, FREng of Cranfield University.

CAeS CEO Paul Hutton commented "We are immensely proud to showcase our achievements to Her Royal Highness and express our gratitude for her visit today.

The Duchess of Edinburgh also presented several monthly 'Extra Mile' awards, which recognise those team members who have gone above and beyond to help the company achieve its goals.



“Saving Charlie November” Book



Our new book is progressing well. A proof copy is now in our hands and after final proof read, the book is expected to be ready for dispatch in summer 2024.

The hardback book is A4 landscape format, and in full colour throughout the 180 pages. It will be a limited print run.

Price will be £30, plus carriage at cost.

Orders received by 30.6.24 will be at the special price of £25 plus carriage at cost - for UK this will be £5.

If you would like a copy please email: savingcn@bnaps.org.uk

Supporting BNAPS to save and preserve B-N Islander G-AVCN

BNAPS News Review (BNR)

We are always looking for news and feature articles for inclusion in BNR. If you would like to submit anything regarding B-N aircraft, past or present please contact the Editor. We'd really like to see pictures of B-N aircraft from where you are, or if you are travelling.



BN-2 Production History from BN Historians

BN Historians produce a "printed to order" version of the BN-2 Production History in loose-leaf A4 format. With full indexes this will be the most up to date data available - direct from the BNH Database.

Price - **£45.00** plus carriage, for a printed version

A PDF file is also available for only **£40.00** - no carriage necessary and will be emailed after confirmed payment.

You can also chose your own cover picture - let BNH know which BN-2 you would like and, if possible, it will be your cover picture.

Email BNH for more information at enquires@bnhistorians.co.uk

BNAPS PRINTS

NEW! Prints of the image below.

Postcards at £1.50 each plus p&p.

A3 colour prints at £7.00 each plus p&p.

Please email: sales@bnaps.org.uk



Peter Graham

More BNAPS Supporters Needed

If any BNAPS Supporters Club member knows of someone who would be interested in joining please pass on contact details to our BNAPS Membership Secretary at membership@bnaps.org.uk

Principal aims of the BNAPS Supporters Club are: *"to assist BNAPS to preserve the history and aircraft of Britten-Norman through member donations and to provide assistance with the day-to-day operations of the charity."*

Anyone with an interest in local aviation heritage is welcome.

Viewing G-AVCN

If you are planning to visit the Wight Military & Heritage Museum, there should be BNAPS people present every Thursday from 10am until 2pm. For Museum details see wmahm.org.uk

BNAPS POSTCARDS

We have an extensive range of postcards depicting Islanders, Defenders and Trislanders, like ZK-PIZ (Steve Lowe). For more details of postcards available, please email: sales@bnaps.org.uk



BNAPS

BNAPS has a very active Facebook group page. We encourage you join - search for "Britten-Norman Aircraft Preservation Society".



BNAPS is represented on line at: bnaps.org.uk (Please note that we will soon be working on an update).

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:

7, William Close, Fareham, Hampshire. PO14 2PQ

Trustees are Peter Graham, Bob Wilson, Guy Palmer, Bob Wealthy (Chairman) and Allan Wright.

Please note:

Whilst BNAPS has contact with Britten-Norman from time to time, as a charitable trust BNAPS is an independent organisation.

editor@bnaps.org.uk

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