



# GUERNSEY FRIENDS OF AIR SEARCH

## NEWSLETTER - 2005

**This is a special year for Channel Islands Air Search.  
2005 marks 25 years of service to the Channel Islands.**

To mark this special year, it was decided to hold a **Thanksgiving and Re-dedication service** for the Channel Islands Air Search Islander aircraft "Lions' Pride"



On Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2005, a service took place in the Air Search Hangar, led by The Very Rev'd K Paul Mellor, Dean of Guernsey in the presence of His Excellency The Lieutenant-Governor of Guernsey. Lieutenant-General Sir John Foley, The Bailiff of Guernsey Sir de Vic Carey and Lady Carey.

**Chief Officer Captain Roger Dadd gave a speech on The First Twenty-Five Years of Channel Islands Air Search.**

"I have been asked to talk to you about the first 25 years of Air Search. When I thought about this and what I was going to say and how I could keep it brief to avoid boring most of you here who already know all about us, I

realised there are some things which have changed in a quarter of a century and, perhaps surprisingly, some things which have not changed at all.

When we started we had the Piper Aztec aeroplane that lived outside. We worked from a small brick building, which was permanently damp; we had a VHF radio in the aeroplane - and nothing else that was particular to our needs. We had a kettle and telephone in the hut, and no loo. Gradually things developed. We were able to put a radar in the nose of the aircraft just like the radar in this (pointing to Islander aircraft). We fitted a flare chute so that we could drop our orange smoke-markers. It is in this aeroplane - it is actually a piece of boiler flue. We were equipped with survival suits but we didn't have enough money so we shared them and, as somebody who has been the second one in the suit on a warm day, I can tell you that it is quite an anti-social experience! Later the hangar was built; this aeroplane came to us and it was eventually equipped with the thermal imaging - that little football under the nose - which cost a mere £200,000 if you please. Sky Shout - so that we can talk to people in the water and tell them that the helicopter or the lifeboat will be with them in a short space of time. We have an air droppable dinghy now, which we couldn't have carried in the Aztec and we have the homers - those two black aerials on the top - none of it very graceful but that allows us to home onto people who have an emergency beacon or who are transmitting. All of this has been possible because of the work of the Friends of Air Search led initially by John Torode in Guernsey, his colleagues in Alderney, Sark and Jersey and the work of the Trustees, often behind the scenes. Everything that you see today has been a result of those efforts and has been donated, almost exclusively, by the communities of the Channel Islands.

But what has not changed? In twenty-five years it has remained the case that day or night, if the Harbourmaster or his colleagues call for the service, within thirty minutes this aeroplane and its predecessor would be ready to go, crew on board, fully briefed - and that is a pretty quick turnout time.

During the quarter century that we have been working we have always worked with the lifeboats of the Channel Islands, the lifeboats from France sometimes, the lifeboats from the UK and the helicopters from France, in recent years the helicopter from Brecqhou, the fixed-wing aircraft from France, and the fixed wing aircraft from the UK. It's sad that the Squadron Commander of Guernsey's Own 201 Squadron can't be with us today - he planned to be here - and it's been a privilege to work with all of these other agencies which, between us, perhaps give the Channel Islands one of the best levels of coverage for search and rescue anywhere in the world.

In some years we have been busy, in other years we have been quiet. I can remember a few years ago we performed fourteen services in the year; this year to date we have already had ten calls for our service and we are not even into April.

What has not changed for me and my crew members, both men and women - and I notice that the hymn was couched in terms of airmen - what has not changed is the feeling of satisfaction when you know that you have actually achieved a part in saving people's lives. The atmosphere in this aeroplane as it comes back to base, the atmosphere in the crew room, is something which needs to be felt, to be experienced, to understand; it is that which makes it so very worthwhile. Equally I have to say there is that feeling of sadness when you come away from a job and you know that there is nothing more to be done. I found it strange that within a week of attending a memorial service in Saint Michel du Valle, the Parish Church in the north of this Island, a service in memory of a Guernsey fisherman who lost his life in Sark - within a week I was out with the crew, as were others of the crew on further services, working our way round some fairly intense snow storms looking for the second time in a short space of time for two fishermen lost from Alderney. I can only say to you that it is a sad business when you do that, but it is the times when you come back knowing you have saved a life that really matter.

But if I may just take a moment to speak personally as one of the people, not the only one by any means, involved with setting up Air Search in the first place. What I feel more than anything else is a sense of pride in the crew we have, who as a result of all the efforts of the fundraisers behind the scenes, and all the work that makes it possible, allow us to provide a service by a team which is as committed and as good humoured as they are - even when sometimes they find their boss just a little bit of a hard taskmaster"

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This service marked the start of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations and events for Channel Islands Air Search in the Bailiwick of Guernsey.

## **NEWS UPDATE**

The Annual General Meeting of the Guernsey Friends of Air Search was held on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2004. Full details of the 2005 Committee appear at the end of this newsletter.

As you may have read in the Guernsey Evening Press, in April Channel Islands Air Search was honoured to be awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.



This award is given to Voluntary Organisations in recognition of their essential roles in daily life. Organisations are nominated and in 2005 just 92 awards were given throughout the United Kingdom. The “unsung heroes” logo at the head of this Newsletter marks this award..



Some of the Air Search Crew and Guernsey Friends Committee

## **HANGAR EVENINGS**

As in previous years we have held our Hangar Evenings for groups and organisations. These have again proved to be very well received. This year so far we have had visits from the W.I., Divers, Scouts, Guides, Cubs, and a Ladies Luncheon group.

**We are always looking for new groups for these Hangar Evenings, so if you know of any Social Club or Organisation, who would like to view the aircraft and hear a short talk on the work of Air Search, please contact one of the Guernsey Friends Committee.**

## **FUND RAISING**

**The Annual Draw took place on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2004.** This draw was again a great success and plays an important part in our fund-raising. Our thanks to all the companies, who donated prizes for this draw. A special thanks to all our helpers who stood, in all kinds of weather conditions to sell the draw tickets and to all the Friends of Air Search who bought the tickets sent to them with the last news letter.

December 2004 also gave us the opportunity to have a stand at the **Round Table Charities Fayre**. We had on display our new “Little Chapel” Christmas Cards, these were very well received by all present. Our thanks are expressed to Beverley Foulds for allowing us to use her photograph.

Sales of this card to corporate businesses and the general public proved a huge success. For those who have not seen these cards we still have some available. These will be on sale at the shows and venues attended by Guernsey Friends of Air Search, throughout the year.

You can also obtain these cards by contacting Reg Noble on Tel. no. 238622



In February, we attended the Guernsey Boat Show, held on the Albert Pier, the weather was not kind to us as the event was hit by gale force winds and rain.

In March we attended the 8<sup>th</sup> Guernsey Cub Scouts Group's “Fun Evening” with the proceeds going to Air Search. The cubs arranged all the games from roll a penny to a very interesting jar tombola, where they fill jars with various goods.

June was a busy month, which started with The Harbour Carnival. This event returned to its usual Friday night slot, but again the weather was not on our side. Although it didn't rain during the event it was a cool evening with no shelter available to the charities that attended. Also in June we joined in at the Delancey Fun Day and the St Saviour's Revel both events were held on sunny days which brought out the crowds.

The Summer Wave concert held in July, brought the crowds to Saumarez Park. Charities were invited to attend. Guernsey Friends of Air Search placed two tents at the event to sell our Air Search goods and play our successful "Find a Guernsey Teddy" game.

In August we again took our caravan to the West Show, This year the weather was fine and sunny. Unfortunately on the Wednesday we were positioned in a very quiet part of the site. On the Thursday we managed to move to a busier area and had a successful event.

The Lions Club Donkey Derby was also in August and we again used the tents to sell our goods.

**Over the next few months our main aim is to sell our draw tickets for the Grand Draw, which takes place on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2005 - 8pm at the Yacht Club.**

**All ticket counterfoils and money should be sent to Mr. M Quarrington, Champ du Pretre, Les Traudes, St Martin, Guernsey GY4 6LR by Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2005.**

We have managed to obtain permission to sell the draw tickets at Safeways on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October. Also at Checkers, on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October. Other venues are being approached for their permission on other dates.

## **SUPPORTERS**

Throughout the year we could not have attended so many events without our helpers, who "man" our stands come rain or shine. To these people the Guernsey Friends of Air Search Committee, give our grateful thanks.

We on behalf of the whole organisation (Crew, Trustees and Friends Committee) would like to take this opportunity to thank all our supporters who have helped in many different ways to provide funds to keep this essential service in operation.

## **WEBSITE**

If you have not yet seen our web site it is well worth a visit. Our web site address is

[www.ci-airsearch.com](http://www.ci-airsearch.com)

## **CHANNEL ISLANDS CO-OPERATIVE**

**Air Search, have a CO-OP dividend share number. When you shop we would be grateful if you would consider using it. Our share number is:-**

**83322**

## **USED STAMPS**

We would be grateful for any used stamps that you, your friends or the companies that you may work for can donate. These stamps are removed from the envelopes, sorted and sold on behalf of Channel Islands Air Search, by Mr. Dave Hugo.

If you have any stamps, they can be handed in to Dave, who can be contacted on 241182. If you have larger numbers or it is a company collection, please contact Dave or a committee member, who can arrange collection.

## **CALENDAR**

If you are considering buying the 2006 Guernsey Teddy calendar for yourself or to give to friends and family. Please be advised that the April 2006 picture features "Guernsey Ted" in a Channel Islands Air Search survival suit.

These calendars are on sale in shops, but if bought through the Air Search Committee 50% of the cost will go to Air Search.

**If you wish to purchase either the Calendar @ £4.00 or the desk version @ £3.00, please contact Julie Watson on Tel 720881 or 07781 109 686.**

## **OPERATIONS**

**Searches undertaken since the last Newsletter are listed below:**

- Ø Man reported missing, cliffs in the Petit Bot area searched. Nothing found. Man was later found elsewhere and returned home.
- Ø CrossCo requested Air Search for sailboarder off the French coast in the area of St Quay Portieux. Board found washed up on beach. No person found. Aircraft diverted to Dinard for the night due to poor weather conditions.
- Ø Red flare sighted off Jersey, nothing found
- Ø EPIRB off Jersey. Aircraft on training flight. Plane flew over area, no further signal heard.
- Ø Red flare sighted off the Minquies. Nothing found after search of the area
- Ø Overdue fishing boat from Sark to Jersey. Bobbers spotted off Little Sark. On closer inspection the boat was revealed just below the surface. Lifeboat directed to scene. Search continued for missing crew, no one found.
- Ø Overdue fishing boat "Our Pete", search round Alderney area. Weather conditions worsened (snowing). Aircraft stood down.
- Ø Continuation of search for missing boat "Our Pete" Aircraft returned to refuel and change crew, this time sighting of oil made, but no one found.
- Ø Call to locate EPIRB Aircraft searched at 1000ft several vessels sighted but but identified as not in distress, No further signal heard.
- Ø Man overboard from yacht off Perros Guirec. Flir and searchlight used. Search in conjunction with French helicopter and lifeboat. No sign of missing person.
- Ø Man overboard from Weymouth fishing boat. No sign of missing person.
- Ø EPIRB from French fishing vessel. Crew from vessel picked up from life raft by container ship.
- Ø Search for a woman reported missing in Guernsey. Missing person not located.
- Ø Call to vessel reported sinking north of Sark. Occupants rescued by St Peter Port lifeboat.

- Ø Search in conjunction with French Helicopter, for source of EPIRB signal, established as being in Braye Harbour, Alderney. Boat to boat check was carried out by Alderney authorities.
- Ø Search in conjunction with Coastguard helicopter for a diver missing mid-channel from a Weymouth based dive boat. Nothing found.
- Ø Man reported overboard from yacht in single-handed yacht race from the Needles to Cherbourg. Casualty spotted by fellow competitor and rescued by French Helicopter.
- Ø Night search for a man reported overboard from a French sailing ship south of St Martin's Point. no sign of casualty found.
- Ø Man overboard from fishing boat. No sign of missing person.
- Ø Canoe reported upturned off the north -west coast of Jersey. The St Helier lifeboat confirmed no persons were missing.

## **2005 COMMITTEE**

**The Friends of Air Search have a small committee, but together with our helpers, we try to cover as many events as possible during the year. If you feel you can help in any way, please contact one of the committee members.**

		<b>Contact Numbers</b>
<b>Julyan Gardener-Wheeler</b>	<b>President</b>	<b>266188</b>
<b>Richard Corcoran</b>	<b>Vice-President</b>	<b>727704</b>
<b>Mike Quarrington</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>239448</b>
<b>Julie Watson</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	<b>720881</b>
<b>Ian Larby</b>		<b>238060</b>
<b>Reg Noble</b>		<b>238622</b>
<b>Russell Clark</b>		
<b>Ralph Burridge</b>	<b>Alderney</b>	<b>822297</b>
<b>Tony Ventress</b>	<b>Sark</b>	<b>832248</b>

## **CHANNEL ISLANDS AIR SEARCH**

### **To Fly, To Save**

**Please support the Friends to support them**