



HCGB Members honoured at the RAeC Awards

The Royal Aero Club has given three prestigious awards to members of the Helicopter Club of Great Britain

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Club member Matthew Bolshaw MBE, Chairman of RAeC Medals and Awards Committee Prince Michael of Kent, and Chairman of the HCGB (and outgoing Chair of RAeC) David Monks

Event sponsors from Gallagher Insurance Toby Ward, Alex Ward and Nigel Foster

The Royal Aero Club of the United Kingdom held the 2024 awards ceremony at the RAF Club in London for the presentation of the 2023 medals and awards. The guest of honour was His Royal Highness Prince Michael of Kent.

Three HCGB members were honoured at the 2024 awards ceremony.

HCGB favourite and safety guru Richard Mornington-Sanford was awarded the RAeC silver medal for his lifelong dedication to aviation safety, his renowned knowledge on Robinson Helicopters and his services to aviation.

Kurt and Frank Robinson of Robinson Helicopters were awarded the historic Breguet Trophy for the pioneering works that have gone into producing the most famous civilian helicopters in the world. As was stated in the award citation – a generation of helicopter pilots owe a debt of gratitude to Frank and Kurt for producing a reliable and affordable helicopter that put helicopter flying in the grasp of ordinary pilots. As it turns out the award was very timely as Kurt had announced at HAI that he was moving to an advisory role and David Smith, would be taking over as President and CEO. Unfortunately, our honorary member, Kurt, was unable to attend the award ceremony, it sadly coincided with a significant wedding anniversary and a cruise.

Club member, founder of Pooleys Swords, Robert Pooley LVO, MBE, CStJ, was awarded The Royal Aero Club Chairman's Award. Bob has many achievements under his belt spanning many years. His citation is worth reading as it spans some sixty-six years.

The ceremony was generously sponsored by Mike Pearson and Popham Airfield, Gallagher Insurance and Pooleys Flight Equipment.

Congratulations to our award recipients!

Club members Richard Mornington-Sanford and Robert Pooley





Club member Sebastian Pooley and Christine Fuller from Pooleys Flight Equipment

Citations for the winners

Richard Mornington-Sanford, RAeC Silver Medal

Richard Mornington-Sanford has been an active member of the Helicopter Club of Great Britain for over 25 years.

Richard has over fifty years of experience in the aviation industry; forty of these with Robinson helicopters. A CAA licensed helicopter engineer; a retired flight instructor (helicopters) and an active air accident investigator:



Safety guru and Club member Richard Mornington-Sanford was awarded the Royal Aero Club of the United Kingdom silver medal

Robinson Helicopter Company

Frank Robinson founded the Robinson Helicopter Company in 1973 with a vision to "produce the world's highest quality, most reliable helicopters in the most efficient, cost-effective way possible".

Legend has it that at the age of nine Frank drew his enthusiasm for helicopters from a picture of Igor Sikorsky hovering a prototype of his VS300 helicopter; the idea that a machine could remain stationary in the air set him on a course for the rest of his life.

Having worked as an engineer for Cessna, McCulloch, Kaman, Bell and Hughes, he could not encourage any of his employers to invest in the concept of a small, low-cost helicopter. This led to the foundation of Robinson Helicopters in 1973 and the world famous R22 was designed in

His unique combination of expertise means that he is in demand from both aviation companies and aviation authorities across the world. Richard holds a Robinson Helicopter Accident/Technical Investigator and has RHC Factory Maintenance Training approval for the R22/R44/R66 types and conducts these courses in the UK, Europe and Worldwide. He also has a Part 66 engineering licence and UK CAA and EASA Part 147 Type Training approval for the R22/R44 and Lycoming engine and the R66 and RR300 (corp 250) engine. Combined with being a retired flight instructor on type, he is credited with having unrivalled experience, outside of the factory, on the Robinson product.

He lectures worldwide on Human Factor Topics, is the author of 'Flight Safety Harps' and lockdown 'Tea and Biscuit' articles as well as articles published in various aviation magazines. He has hosted various Pro Bono Flight Safety lecture events in the UK. He still actively promotes the 'Tea and Biscuit' series of safety talks that are now well recognised in helicopter flying.

Richard tirelessly promotes aviation safety throughout the helicopter community, charging no fee for his presentations to HCGB and other pilots. He is constantly striving to keep pilots safe through educating them. His contribution to flight safety is exemplary and it richly deserves to be singled and recognised.



The Breguet Trophy was awarded to Frank and Kurt Robinson of The Robinson Helicopter Company

the Robinson's family living room. It was brought to production in a tin hangar in Torrance Airport in 1975. Frank himself flew the first prototype of the R22. Upon production in 1979, the R22 became the world's top selling civilian helicopter.

During the 1980s, the R44 joined the production line at Robinson Helicopters. Frank again flew the first prototype in 1990. Delivery of the R44 commenced in 1993 and by 2007 more than 3,000 were delivered across seventy countries worldwide. Its popularity overtook the R22. Plans were put in place in 2001 for the first Robinson aircraft with a turbine engine. By 2010 this has become a reality with the first R66 delivered in November with in excess of 100 R66s on order.

Frank retired from the company in 2010 with son, Kurt, taking over as President. Since 1988, The Robinson Helicopter Company has been the world's leading manufacturer of civilian helicopters. A generation of helicopter pilots owe a debt of gratitude to the Frank and Kurt Robinson for pioneering affordable and reliable helicopters to put helicopter flying within the grasp of ordinary pilots.

The Chairman's Award



Club member, Robert Pooley LVO, MBE, CStJ being presented with the Royal Aero Club of the United Kingdom Chairman's Award

The name Pooley has been synonymous with PPL to ATPL training in the UK and overseas for 66 years.

Robert Pooley, better known in aviation circles as Bob, joined the Royal Air Force in 1953 as an airman. He trained as a fitter on jet engines and was then posted to Germany to join 4 Squadron working on Vampires and Sabres.

He returned to the UK to complete his four-year National Service. He subsequently joined De Havilland's Field Service Department before transferring to

DH Comet Flight Test. During his first year at DH he completed his PPL(A) flying Tiger Moths and Austers. It was at this time that his interest in pilot training equipment started. His first kneeboard was made on the night shift at De Havilland.

Bob started a company called Airtour International which quickly grew, with their first offices at Elstree Aerodrome followed in 1965 by a factory in Cranfield. The first Pooleys Flight Guide was completed in 1962. The product range started to expand and by 1964 they had completed the CRP-1 Flight Computer or wizz-wheel. Then in 1965 came the CRP-5, a product that continues to be widely used in ATPL training the world over. Pooley also produced a number of bespoke items included a calculator for Concorde.

In the early 80s, Robert started publishing the Air Pilots Manuals by Trevor Thom, the go-to series that revolutionised PPL training. Over 250,000 pilots worldwide have used the series and they continue to be the manuals of choice for the majority of schools in the UK.

Bob was also an early member of the HCGB having gained his PPL (H) in 1967. He became Chairman of the Club and was instrumental in setting up the first World Helicopter Championship. Indeed, he went on to run the second Championship at Castle Ashby. From 1964 Bob was deeply involved with the Army Air Corps. In particular as Trustee for the Museum of Army Flying Development and as a Director of their International Air Show. When the MOD cut funding for that event, Bob, in collaboration with the AAC and HCGB, ran its successor Helimeet.

He played an active roll in the Royal Aero Club becoming Vice Chairman. He also became deeply involved in the Balloon Club becoming Chairman in the 1980s. At one time, Bob's company was making hot air balloons from their factory in Cranfield including one for the Army Air Corp. He gained his Ballooning licence in 1982. Bob was also President of three Air Training Corps Squadrons, Vice President of the Guild of Aviation Artists and Vice President of the British Precision Pilots Association. He is an FAI International judge. He has also been a judge of the International Dawn to Dusk Competition founded by the Duke of Edinburgh.

Bob became a member of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators in 1964 and took office as Master in 1987. His philanthropy within the Air Pilots and other organisations has made a huge impact in many spheres including within the world of ceremonial swords. Even before setting up Pooley Sword, Bob donated swords to many aviation organisations including AOPA, Aerobility, HCGB, the LAA and the Air Pilots to honour the outstanding achievements of the recipient. His generosity within the aviation community has been a life-long passion and commitment.